

# **Students' perceptions and usage of Social Media for job seeking in the hospitality industry**

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Opinnäytetyö

Hotelli- ja ravintola-alan liikkeen-  
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<p><b>Supervisor</b> Meri Vehkaperä</p> <p>There are several global issues and trends shaping recruitment and other areas of human resource management; technology, globalization and challenging economic situations being some of them. One of the most significant issues in Finland and the entire Europe is the declining of the working-age population. This, from the recruiter's perspective, will lead to difficulties in attracting and retaining competent workforce. The “war for talent” is a global situation that is said to bring challenges to many industries, the hospitality industry being one of them.</p> <p>For companies to be able to attract and retain the younger generation workers they have to first gain an understanding of how the younger workers differ from their predecessors and what are the factors critical to them when choosing a job. This thesis will seek to find out where and how the Generation Y hospitality industry workers look for information about jobs and companies, how they apply for jobs and what their deciding factors are. The underlying presumption is that since the Generation Y – those aged between 15 to 35 today – is the first one to grow up in the digital age and the era of Social Media, companies might benefit from recruiting them via Social Media.</p> <p>To find out which recruitment channels the Generation Y workers in the hospitality industry use, which Social Media channels they are familiar with and how they would like to use Social Media when looking for jobs, a survey was conducted among the hospitality industry students in Finland. 10 vocational colleges and universities of applied sciences from all over the country were randomly selected to take part in an online questionnaire. These schools offer education in all fields of the hospitality industry, leading to degrees in either upper secondary or tertiary level. Both Finnish and International students were included in the study. Nine schools ended up participating in the study in May 2011, yielding in 531 responses. The responses were mainly analyzed with SPSS using a quantitative method, with two questions analyzed using a qualitative method in order to gain deeper understanding of how exactly could Social Media be used in recruitment in the hospitality industry.</p> <p>The study shows that while Social Media was used more often than recruitment fairs, TV, radio or outdoor ads when looking for information about jobs and companies, sources such as Mol.fi, company websites and newspaper job ads were still preferred</p>	

over Social Media. Not many were using Social Media for work-related purposes at that stage, and 54 % of the respondents did not think they were likely to apply for jobs via Social Media. However 84 % somewhat or strongly agreed that companies should be more active in Social Media, and 79 % somewhat or strongly agreed that they would consider using Social Media for job seeking and career development if there were more opportunities available in Social Media. In May 2011, recruitment in Social Media was still somewhat unheard of in the Finnish hospitality industry, which was also reflected in hospitality industry students' views on it.

The results indicate that Social Media cannot fully replace traditional recruitment channels but should not be completely forgotten by recruiters either, as it does present a lot of potential in terms of volume, convenience and cost-efficiency. The hospitality industry students can mainly be found on Facebook, which can be used for job advertisements, referrals and employer branding. YouTube reaches most of the students as well, and can be a good tool for employer branding. LinkedIn and Twitter on the other hand did not reach quite as many students in the spring of 2011. When recruiting in Social Media, the participatory and open nature of Social Media should be taken into account, as well as the hospitality industry students concerns – privacy and security issues being some of them. The respondents' deciding factors will help in designing job advertisements and planning employer branding campaigns – work atmosphere and work content were two of the most valued factors when choosing a job and these might be worth emphasizing.

**Key words** recruitment, Social Media, Generation Y, human resource management

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<p>Teknologia, globalisaatio ja haastavat taloustilanteet ovat esimerkkejä tekijöistä ja trendeistä, jotka muokkaavat rekrytointia sekä muita henkilöstöjohtamisen aloja. Ikääntyminen ja siitä aiheutuva työikäisen väestön väheneminen ovat merkittäviä tekijöitä Suomessa samoin kuin muualla Euroopassa. Rekrytoijan näkökulmasta tämänkaltaiset tekijät tuovat haasteita pätevän työvoiman löytämiseen sekä pitämiseen. Parhaista työntekijöistä käydään sotaa kaikilla aloilla, eikä hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailuala ole poikkeus.</p> <p>Jotta nuorempien sukupolvien työntekijöitä voidaan houkutella ja jotta heidät saadaan pidettyä, tulee ymmärtää heidän eronsa suhteessa vanhempiin sukupolviin. Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on selvittää mitä kautta ja miten nuoret hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualan työntekijät etsivät ja hakevat töitä, ja mitkä heidän kriteerinsä on työpaikkaa valitessa. Taustalla on oletus, jonka mukaan rekrytointi sosiaalisessa mediassa voisi hyödyttää yrityksiä. Y-sukupolvi, 15-35 –vuotiaat, on ensimmäinen digitaalisessa maailmassa ja sosiaalisen median aikakaudella kasvanut, joten sen jäsenet mahdollisesti voisi myös tavoittaa sosiaalisen median välityksellä.</p> <p>Tutkimuskohteena olivat Suomessa hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualaa ammattiopistoissa sekä ammattikorkeakouluissa opiskelevat, ja tutkittavia tekijöitä olivat muun muassa opiskelijoiden käyttämät työn- ja tiedonhakukanava, heidän sosiaalisen median käyttönä sekä heidän näkemyksensä siitä, miten sosiaalista mediaa voisi käyttää työnhaussa. 10 oppilaitosta ympäri Suomea valittiin satunnaisesti tutkimukseen, joka toteutettiin nettikyselynä keväällä 2011. Tavoitteena oli kartoittaa mitä sosiaalisen media kanavia kotimaisen HORECA- ja matkailualan kannattaisi hyödyntää rekrytoinnissa, ja voidaanko sosiaalisella medialla korvata perinteisiä rekrytointikanavia. Tutkimukseen osallistui lopulta yhdeksän oppilaitosta, ja vastauksia kyselyyn saatiin 531 kappaletta. Osallistujien joukossa oli suomalaisia ja kansainvälisiä opiskelijoita. Vastaukset käsiteltiin kvantitatiivisin keinoin SPSS:n avulla, joskin kaksi vastausta analysoitiin kvalitatiivisin keinoin. Tämän arveltiin tuottavan syvällisempää tietoa siitä, kuinka sosiaalista mediaa voisi HORECA- ja matkailu -alalla hyödyntää.</p>	

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Tuloksista ilmenee, että sosiaalista mediaa hyödynnetään enemmän kuin rekrytointimessuja, TV:tä, radiota tai ulkomainontaa kun etsitään tietoa työpaikoista ja yrityksistä. Toisaalta esimerkiksi Mol.fi, yritysten omat nettisivut sekä printtimedia ovat edelleen sosiaalista mediaa suositumpia. Sosiaalista mediaa ei vielä juurikaan keväällä 2011 käytetty työnhaussa, eikä 54 % uskonut tulevansa hakemaan töitä sosiaalisen median välityksellä. Huomionarvoista kuitenkin on, että 84 % oli jossain määrin tai vahvasti samaa mieltä kysyttäessä tulisiko yritysten olla aktiivisempia sosiaalisessa mediassa, ja 79 % jossain määrin tai vahvasti arveli, että tulisi käyttämään sosiaalista mediaa työnhaussa, jos se tarjoaisi enemmän mahdollisuuksia. Suomalaiset hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualan yritykset eivät keväällä 2011 juurikaan käyttäneet sosiaalista mediaa rekrytoinnissa, ja tämä myös heijastui kyselyn vastauksiin.

Tutkimus paljastaa, ettei sosiaalinen media voi täysin korvata perinteisiä rekrytointikanavia. Kuitenkaan sitä ei tulisi myöskään unohtaa – käyttäjien määrä, helppous sekä kustannustehokkuus tekevät siitä houkuttelevan rekrytointikanavan. Alan opiskelijat löytää todennäköisimmin Facebookista, jota voidaan käyttää työpaikkailmoitteluun, suositteluissa sekä työnantajan brändäyksessä. YouTube niin ikään tavoittaa valtaosan opiskelijoista, ja toimii erityisesti työnantajan brändäyksen välineenä. LinkedIn ja Twitter sitä vastoin eivät keväällä 2011 olleet vielä alan opiskelijoiden suosiossa. Sosiaalisen median osallistava ja avoin luonne tulisi huomioida rekrytoitaessa, samoin kuin opiskelijoiden sosiaaliseen mediaan liittyvät huolet esimerkiksi yksityisyydensuojan ja turvallisuuden suhteen. Tekijät, jotka vaikuttavat työnvalintapäätöksiin, tulisi huomioida työpaikkailmoituksia sekä brändäystä suunniteltaessa; alan opiskelijoiden näkökulmasta työpaikan henki sekä työn sisältö olivat tärkeimmät päätökseen vaikuttavat tekijät.

**Asiasanat** rekrytointi, sosiaalinen media, Y-sukupolvi, henkilöstöjohtaminen

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# 1 Introduction

There are several global trends that are forcing organizations to rethink recruitment and other areas of their human resource management. Technology, globalization and economic situations are some of the factors that transform the work of human resource managers and line managers. Demographic issues are shaping up to be the primary concern as the working-age population is projected to start decreasing in most parts of Europe from 2020 onwards; in Finland even sooner. The double ageing of Europe – low fertility rates and high life expectancy – puts the society and organizations under a great amount of pressure, as the number of people employed will inevitably begin to shrink in the near future. (Foot & Hook 2008, 56; European Communities 2009, 19-22.)

Faced with these challenges, organizations will need to pay attention on how to attract and retain younger generation workers. Generation Y, people aged between 14 to 34 today, differs somewhat from the previous generations in terms of their work-related values, their pursuit to find balance between work and leisure and their relationship with digital technology. This generation can be described as a challenging, high-maintenance workforce but also one that is high-performing, quick, global and tolerant to diversity. Recruiters should take into account their characteristics and find out their recruitment drivers and deciding factors when forecasting human resource needs, designing job advertisements and choosing recruitment channels. (Dessler 2011, 41; European Communities 2009, 67; Tapscott 2009, 6-7.)

Finding and keeping talented workers is obviously crucial to all industries but Christensen Hughes and Rog (2008, 747) point out the necessity especially in the hospitality industry. Recruitment and retention are major challenges in the hospitality industry, and many organizations experience high turnover. The hospitality industry tends to suffer from poor reputation resulting from costs reductions, seasonality, unsocial working hours, health and safety concerns and poor work-life balance, among some other factors. Another issue is talented customer service workers leaving the hospitality industry to pursue their careers in other industries – customer service skills are easily



transferred from one industry to another. Dealing with skills shortages and scarce supply of workforce has led to the “war for talent”, where organizations in various industries are forced to adapt innovative recruitment methods – and the hospitality industry is not different from others. Effort should be put into besides rethinking recruitment channels, but also into improving both employer and industry reputation to be able to attract qualified job seekers. (Christensen Hughes & Rog 2008, 745 - 747).

This thesis will briefly cover recruitment in general, but the focus will be on recruiting the younger generation hospitality workers with the presumption of Social Media being a fast, cost-effective channel for reaching the Generation Y. The Generation Y workforce are said to have entirely different views about work than did their predecessors, so it is crucial for organizations within the hospitality industry to gain an understanding of how and where the younger generation workers look for jobs and what their recruitment drivers are.

In this study, current hospitality industry students have been identified as potential job seekers – they are the future professionals who might already be looking for jobs in the hospitality industry. As these current hospitality students are the ones that have grown up in the digital age, most of them are no doubt active Internet and social media users. In this sense, it is reasonable to assume that recruiters could reach them via Internet and different Social Media channels. The study was originally initiated by a Nordic hotel chain that had already taken the step to participate in Social Media, mainly Facebook, but had not yet began recruiting via Social Media. However, as the study progressed, it took a more comprehensive approach and transitioned from benefitting the particular company in question to possibly being of use to the entire hospitality industry in Finland.

The aim of this study is to find out the hospitality industry students’ perceptions of Social Media as a channel for job seeking. Their usage of Social Media for job seeking and career development is another central issue. Key questions revolve around the channels hospitality students use to look for information about jobs and companies or to apply for jobs, and their familiarity with different Social Media applications. The idea is to find out to what extent and how hospitality students use or would like to use

Social Media for job seeking and career development. Knowing how and where younger generation hospitality industry students can be reached might be of use when determining recruitment activities. This is the secondary aim of the thesis: to provide recommendations for the hospitality industry as to how Social Media could be used in recruitment and through which channels can hospitality industry students be reached.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the study. A quantitative method was used to create numeric data about the students' behavior and opinions: through which channels students seek and apply for jobs, what Social Media applications they use and what their opinions on Social Media are. This data was complemented with a qualitative method to enrich the study. As Social Media is still a relatively new recruiting channel, gaining a deeper insight from those who participate in it – or those who choose not to participate in it – was thought to improve the quality of the study and perhaps generate new ideas for recruiters in the hospitality industry. (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 12).

## **2 Recruitment**

Recruitment is the area of human resource management that aims at attracting a pool of candidates to fill vacant positions. Simply put, recruitment involves all activities directed towards finding a suitable employee for a post that has become open. These activities should contribute to strengthening the employer image and overall organizational image, and the organizational goals and corporate strategy should be kept in mind through the entire recruitment process. Corporate strategy, which McKenna and Beech (2008, 27) describe as "setting organizational objectives, and then deciding on a comprehensive course of action to achieve those objectives", has a strong link to human resource management: as the organization makes strategic choices about how it will gain competitive edge over competitors, any decisions and actions taken will be affected by how employees act and what type of skills they possess. As for the connection between corporate strategy and recruitment, managers cannot forecast their future human resources needs or select employees without first taking into account how for instance growth plans affect what type of skills the organization needs (Dessler 2011, 179).

### **2.1 Personnel planning and preparatory work**

The recruitment process can be divided into five separate procedures: personnel planning and forecasting, recruiting internal or external candidates, having candidates fill out application forms, using selection tools to screen out applicants and finally interviewing final candidates in order to decide which candidate or candidates should be hired. This thesis will concentrate on recruiting external candidates. The first step, personnel planning and forecasting will be defined first in order to be able to understand what is needed prior to advertising jobs. (Dessler 2011, 178.)

Personnel planning and forecasting has to do with projecting future employment needs. One way of assessing the need for additional human resources would be to forecast revenue, then calculate how many employees are needed to reach the projected sales volume. Obviously, other methods are needed as well, depending on what plans the organization has for the future. As mentioned above, corporate strategy

should always be kept in mind when recruiting. The organization might be planning on reducing costs, expanding, upgrading or downgrading products or services or moving into new markets. Estimated turnover, financial resources and productivity changes should be taken into account as well. It might be that the vacant post is an entirely new one, or then it is due to a current employee leaving the organization. In the latter case, it might be worth thinking about the tasks that the current employee has had before hiring a new one to fill the position. Some of the tasks could be incorporated into another position or vice versa; other tasks could be added to it. Some tasks might not be necessary at all, or they could be done by a machine. Either way, the decisions made regarding vacant positions should be based on the corporate strategy – what kind of skills or qualifications are needed to reach the organization's goals. (Dessler 2011, 178-180; Foot & Hook 2008, 145.)

McKenna and Beech (2008, 179-182) state that prior to recruiting candidates, some preparatory work should be done not only in the form of forecasting employment needs but also by analyzing jobs and creating job descriptions and job specifications. Job descriptions should provide information about jobs – the tasks involved, the equipment used, the working conditions and any responsibilities involved with the job. Job specifications on the other hand describe what types of people are needed for the tasks involved. This information is useful when projecting human resources needs but also when creating job advertisements.

Some criticism regarding job analysis and job descriptions has been expressed, as they might not always leave room for flexibility. Work situations and conditions change, and any changes might affect the job requirements as well. Technology changes the nature of work constantly. As for job specifications, when creating a list of desirable characteristics, it should be kept in mind that one of the aims of recruitment is to provide equal opportunity. Job specifications cannot indirectly or directly discriminate candidates or rule out some of them in the favor of others. (Foot & Hook 2008, 156; McKenna & Beech 2008, 180-182.)

## **2.2 Internal and external recruitment**

After having considered the need for additional human resources, the next decision is usually whether to recruit candidates internally or externally. To fill a vacancy by hiring from within the organization might be a good solution if there are current employees that possess the skills and expertise needed for the position. Internal recruitment might also be part of the organization's recruitment policy. In this case vacancies would be only advertised externally if there are not enough qualified internal candidates. Internal recruitment has some undeniable advantages: the candidate is already familiar with the organization and maybe more committed to it than an external candidate. The organization already knows the candidate's skills, strengths and weaknesses. As for costs, not having to advertise jobs externally or outsource recruitment to an agency might save the organization some money. Recruiting and selecting candidates can be costly and time-consuming, so it is naturally in the organization's interest to ensure that all recruitment activities are as efficient and cost-effective as possible. (Dessler 2011, 178, 185; Foot & Hook 2008, 142-145.)

This thesis focuses on external recruitment which becomes an option if current employees lack the skills and expertise needed. Another motivation to recruit externally is to bring fresh, innovative ideas and new skills to the organization. Again, the choice depends greatly on what the organization needs now and in the future to be able to reach its goals. External recruitment is also a way of communicating with the outside world and building an employer image. The costs of external recruitment come from placing job advertisements and using recruitment agencies and services if necessary. Screening and interviewing applicants cost as well. (McKenna & Beech 2008, 178; 184.)

## **2.3 Recruitment channels and job advertisements**

Once the decision has been made to recruit externally, there are some key issues to consider. Money spent on recruitment is obviously one of the major deciding factors, even more so when the economic times are challenging and organizations face the need to cut costs. Advertisements, recruitment agency services, designing corporate careers websites and screening out applicants all come with costs. The aim is to choose cost-effective recruitment channels that strengthen the employer image and reach a

sufficient pool of suitably qualified applicants. Too few applicants might result in not being able to select the ideal candidate with the desired characteristics and required level of competence, yet too many applicants might mean that a large number of applications received could come from unsuitable candidates. (Dessler 2011, 191; McKenna & Beech 2008, 183-184.)

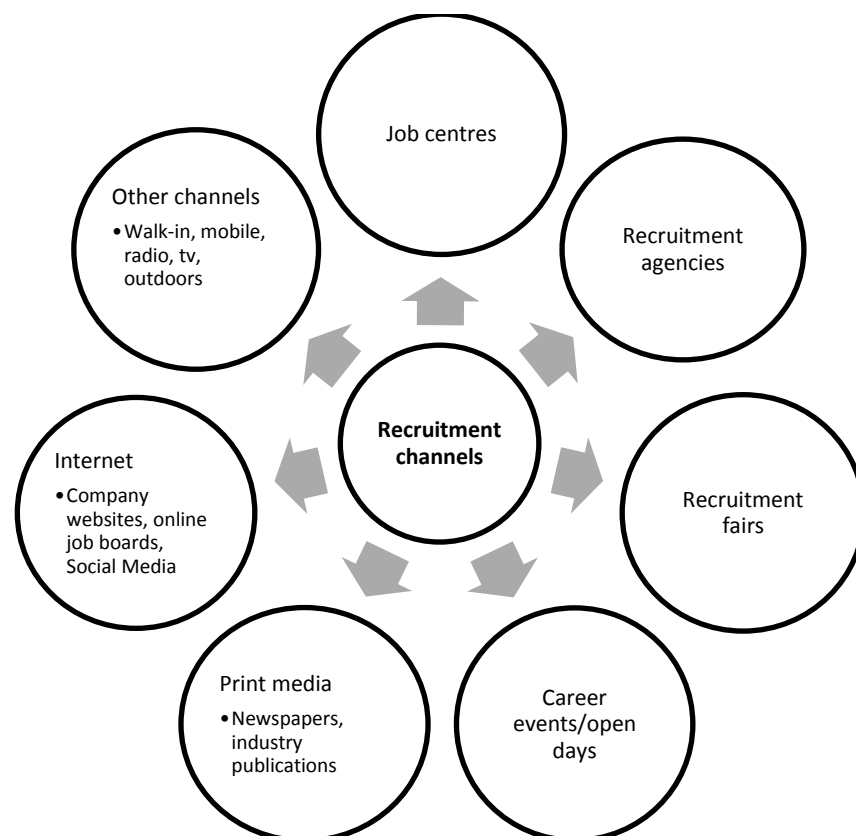
Besides considering how much money the organization is willing to spend on recruitment activities and which channel or channels are optimal for reaching the type of people needed for a particular position, some thought should also be put into how to design a job advertisement to make it attractive for the ideal candidates but not too appealing to the unsuitable ones (Foot & Hook 2008, 157-158). This thesis discusses recruitment from the hospitality industry's viewpoint, focusing on how to recruit the younger generation talent, so the aim is to discover the appropriate channels through which current hospitality students – future professionals – seek for jobs. As for designing job advertisements, this thesis will also seek to find out what kind of things the younger generation hospitality students wish to see in job advertisements and which factors they consider important when choosing a job.

Recruiters should not make assumptions regarding recruitment channels and job advertisements. As recruitment can take up time and resources, it should be monitored. Without monitoring recruitment activities, organizations have very little chance of actually determining how well their recruitment is handled in terms of costs, choice of recruitment channels or selecting the right people for the right jobs. Dessler (2011, 184-185) suggests that the organization might benefit from calculating the ratios of generated leads (received applications) to candidates invited for interviews, invites to conducted interviews, interviews to offers made and finally offers made to actual new hires. Through calculating these ratios and creating a recruiting yield pyramid, the recruiter would be able to figure out how many applications it needs in order to hire a new employee or several employees. This might in turn be useful when deciding on recruitment channels – some channels undeniably yield in more applications than others.

The possibility of reaching a large pool of candidates has been said to be one of the benefits of using Social Media for recruitment activities. The amount of users keeps growing, and should not be ignored by companies. Obviously not all users are potential candidates, but it is fairly easy to target messages to specific users or interest groups in Social Media. Social Media will most likely to some extent replace traditional recruitment channels, as its targeting tools and relatively low costs make it an attractive channel for different industries. For companies, a strong and positive presence in Social Media might also be a good selling point for especially the Generation Y job seekers. However, Social Media will not fully replace traditional recruitment channels – there are still people, especially among the older workforce, who cannot be reached via Social Media. (Laine, T. 20.4.2011; Tulgan 2007, 3.)

### 2.3.1 Recruitment channels

In the era of Web 2.0 and Social Media, those recruitment channels that have not typically operated online can be thought of as traditional recruitment channels. The following figure illustrates some of the recruitment channels that could be used in Finland for recruiting employees in the hospitality industry:



## Graph 1. Recruitment channels

While this figure might not represent all recruitment channels used globally, it covers the main ones used in Finland. In the graph, job centres, recruitment agencies, recruitment fairs, career events and some other channels represent traditional recruitment channels. This is obviously a simplified classification, as most of the traditional recruitment channels use the Internet as well, even so much so that some of them operate mostly online these days.

Job centers are public organizations that offer a wide range of free services for employers and job seekers. For companies, the employment offices offer services ranging from recruiting and consulting to training and development. Recruiting services include posting vacancies online and access to a database that has information about registered job seekers. The advantages of using the services provided by a governmental institution are clearly the possibility of cutting recruitment costs by posting job advertisements for free, access to the office's CV database and saving time by letting the office screen out applicants. When posting vacancies, the employer may also state that it will only hire registered unemployed job seekers – this would contribute towards improving employment locally or nationwide. (Employment and Economic Development Office 2005.)

Recruitment agencies such as Opteam, Staffpoint and Kairest are private personnel service organizations that charge for their services. They typically offer services such as recruitment, personnel hiring, advertising, shortlisting, interviewing, training, coaching and payroll. Organizations could trust these recruitment agencies with their entire recruiting or alternatively hire temporary employees from them. The advantages of using a recruitment agency is the fact that it is a relatively quick process as recruitment agencies are likely to have a database of job seekers. It also saves the organization some time and allows it to focus on its core business. For those organizations that do not have adequate HR functions or a separate HR department, using external services might be highly beneficial. Some downsides are the costs involved as well as a risk of losing control over some of the key HR functions. (Dessler 2011, 192-193; McKenna & Beech 2008, 184.)



Recruitment fairs give students information about job opportunities and function as a venue for employers to get in contact with current or future job seekers while strengthening their employer brand. Recruitment fairs, most of which take place annually in the major cities, are often organized in collaboration with schools. While recruitment fairs are large events that allow for numerous employers to present their organizations, open days and events organized by companies are those that welcome potential job seekers into the organization to meet managers or team leaders, see the premises and get an idea of what working in the organization is like. Open days might be a good option for organization that are facing a scarce supply of workforce or that are recruiting several employees at once. (McKenna & Beech 2008, 187.)

Referrals and word-of-mouth are one option for finding new employees. Current employees most likely have friends or family members whose skills and qualifications they know well – organizations can make use of their employees' personal networks by for instance paying a bonus for every referral that has led to a successful hire. Some concerns have been expressed, mainly regarding equality and diversity. While referrals can be good option and one that has been used to some extent in various organizations, it might come with a risk of unequal opportunities and loss of diverse workforce. This is based on a theory that employees will mainly recommend people who are like them. (Foot & Hook 2008, 157; McKenna & Beech 2008, 185.)

Dessler (2011, 199), on the other hand, sees employee referrals as an important, cost-effective source of recruitment and states that current employees tend to give their employers accurate, honest information about the people they are referring as by doing so they risk damaging their own reputation. This view is supported by the Jobvite Social Recruiting Survey conducted in 2010 that surveyed over 600 human resources and recruiting professionals based in US: when asked which recruitment channels rank highest in terms of the quality of candidates, it was referrals that ranked the highest (Jobvite 2010, 6.)

National or local newspapers and different types of industry publications are still quite popular even if web-based recruitment has replaced them to some extent. The choice

of medium is a key success factor for print media advertising. As previously mentioned, the importance of targeting job ads where they will best reach the prospective candidates should not be underestimated. The recruiter should take into consideration the nature of the position and the expertise needed to successfully fill the position, and find out what type of newspapers and magazines people with those specific skills and qualifications read. Most newspapers and magazines share their circulation and metrics. This helps in estimating how many job seekers the print advertisement will reach, but will not tell how many of those job seekers are actually qualified for the vacancy or interested in the organization. (Dessler 2011, 191.)

Industry publications are special magazines and journals focused on sharing information about a specific industry. These will reach a more targeted readership; however most of the hospitality industry magazines and journals are not published on a monthly, let alone a weekly basis, so placing ads in these publications is not necessarily the fastest way of finding new employees. Some of the industry publications have entirely replaced their traditional newspapers with online versions.

The Internet is a rapidly growing and developing recruitment channel that can be used either instead of or simultaneously with traditional recruitment channels. Internet recruitment, or web-based recruitment, might mean designing functional company websites, posting job advertisements on online job boards such as Monster, Uranus and Jobstep or using different Social Media tools. Even recruitment fairs can be completely transferred to the virtual world. These days, web-based tools and applications might allow for more flexible, innovative solutions than some of the traditional recruitment channels. (Foot & Hook 2008, 160.)

Web-based recruitment can reduce the costs of recruitment and speed up the recruitment and selection process. It can be used to strengthen the employer brand; however organizations should also be aware that as they are most likely a part of numerous conversations online, their actions or lack of actions online might work against them and end up weakening their brand. Web-based recruitment no doubt broadens the applicant pool as the number of users keeps growing. Posting jobs and sharing information about the organization is beneficial from the job seeker's viewpoint as well as it enables

them to look for information and apply for jobs regardless of time and place. (Foot & Hook 2008, 160-161; McKenna and Beech 2008, 187-188.)

Other recruitment channels include walk-ins, radio, TV, outdoors and mobile. Hospitality industry companies in Finland tend to receive a great amount of open applications. Walk-ins can no doubt be a good source of applicants, while it can be argued whether or not the quality of open applications is always up to par with other applications. Dessler (2011, 199-200) reminds that all open applications should be replied promptly, even if the company is not hiring. As for radio, TV and outdoors, these can be viable channels for reaching a large number of people – however these are also costly, and it cannot be predicted how many of the people that are exposed to the ads are actually looking for work in the hospitality industry.

Mobile recruitment – the development of mobile recruitment applications – has been said to possess great potential, even though companies all over the world have been slow to adapt to it. Those who advocate for mobile recruiting often mention the widespread use of smart phones – along with tablets, smart phones are globally gaining more users than PC's. Convenience and easy access regardless of time and place are some of the advantages. Versatile and functional features might also make mobile phones an attractive recruitment channel for companies, GPS and possibility of limiting job search to specific geographical locations being one of the features. (Patel 2011.)

### **2.3.2 Job advertisements**

As previously mentioned, the job advertisement should be designed in a way that it attracts a sufficient number of suitably qualified candidates while making it easy for the unsuitable applicants to decide that their skills and qualifications do not match with the requirements of the job. The aim of successful recruiting is not to attract as many applicants as possible, but to attract the right ones. (Foot & Hook 2008, 157.)

The general advice is that the more information the job advertisement reveals the better. The prospective applicant makes the decision whether or not to apply based on the information given, so the organization should emphasize its major selling points and

make sure that the job advertisement covers all the necessary details. Foot and Hook (2008, 157-158) suggest that at least the following aspects could be worth mentioning: information about the organization, job title, major duties, competencies required, opportunities and challenges, salary, benefits and information on how to apply.

Designing print ads differs from designing online ads. Print ads tend to be quite compact due to limited space – the bigger the advertisement the higher the costs. Obviously print ads should give the prospective applicant enough information, but the layout and choice of words has to be planned carefully so that it will create interest. It might be beneficial to encourage job seekers to visit the company website where they will find more detailed information. When posting vacancies online, it is strongly advisable not to post print ads online as such. Print media and the internet are two entirely different types of media and their distinctive features should be kept in mind when designing job advertisements. The internet has countless useful features that can be used for sharing information about jobs and employer branding. Video, messengers, virtual worlds and interactive experiences can be used to enhance recruitment activities and make sure the job seeker finds all the necessary information easy, fast and in an interesting form. (Dessler 2011, 189-191.)

## **2.4 Trends affecting recruitment**

There are several global issues and trends shaping recruitment and other areas of human resource management; technology, globalization and challenging economic situations being some of them. These trends bring challenges and force human resource managers to rethink different activities and procedures related to people management. Changes in the demographic environment also play a major role in how the nature of work will develop in the coming years and how this development will affect recruitment activities and other areas of human resource management. (Dessler 2011, 36.)

### **2.4.1 An ageing workforce**

One of the most significant issues in Finland and the entire Europe is the declining of the working-age population. This will affect all areas of the society and put a huge pressure on the labor market. Due to what Foot & Hook (2008, 56) describe as the

”double ageing of Europe” - low fertility rates and greater life expectancy - it can be projected that as of 2015, the population in the EU will no longer grow naturally. This means that the ageing population will take up a growing share of the entire population but due to low fertility rates, there will not be a sufficient number of births to cover the loss of workforce that will be the result of the ageing population leaving the labor market. The working-age population has conventionally been defined as aged between 15 to 64 years, and this share of the population has already started to decline. The overall supply of workforce in the EU is expected to start decreasing after 2020 but Finland is projected to see the decline already during this decade. (European Communities 2009, 19-22.)

Some estimates show that even with ageing population, the employment rates in many of the European countries are projected to increase in the near future. The European societies may be able to boost the employment rates by encouraging more people to enter the labor market through creating more flexible work opportunities (multiple jobs, part-time jobs) and recruiting so called non-traditional employees, for instance foreigners, older workers and minorities. However, even if the employment rates will see an increase, that increase will only temporarily cushion the affect the ageing population will have on the labor market. The number of people employed will start shrinking after 2020. (European Communities 2009, 55.)

The ageing workforce and the negative effect it will have on the economic dependency ratio – the ratio of non-workers to workers – will have an impact on the labor market and the economic growth. It will affect various areas of human resource management, recruitment being one of them. Migration has been mentioned as the only factor driving population growth from 2015 onwards, and the European Communities (2009, 46) state that Finland will need greater net immigration flows than some other European countries in order to maintain our current labor force-to-population ratio. Foot and Hook (2008, 58) mention Finland's challenges with labor shortages as well, reminding that any slowing of economic growth will make it difficult for our society to maintain the welfare system as it is. Work-based migration may be one of the best solutions for boosting our economic growth, so it is clear that Finnish companies will have to look into attracting and recruiting more workforces from abroad.

Companies in Finland will have to consistently build their employer image and industry reputation in order to not only attract work-based migrants but also to keep the Finnish working-age population in Finland. According to Foot and Hook (2008, 58), Scandinavian countries are losing young workforce – leaving Scandinavian companies dealing with even greater labor shortages.

#### **2.4.2 Generation Y**

For companies to be able to attract and retain the younger generation workers they have to first gain an understanding of how the younger workers differ from their predecessors. When choosing a job, the factors critical for baby boomers (aged 48-66 today) or Generation X (aged 36-47 today) might not be equally as important to Generation Y – those who are aged between 15 to 35 today. In some sources, the Generation Y has also been referred to as the Millennials, who are aged approximately 17 to 32 today. However, the term Generation Y will be used in the thesis to represent the entire population born between late 1970's and mid to late 1990's. The next generation is often called the iGen or Generation Z, and it will enter adulthood in approximately 5 years. The Generation Z will no doubt have their own set of values that will again slightly differ from those of the Generation Y. (Tapscott 2009, 16.)

According to Dessler (2011, 41), Generation Y workers have different work-related values than the older employees. They are likely to be more family-centric or dual-centric, seeking to find balance between work and leisure. Generation Y can be seen as a challenging, high-maintenance workforce but also a crop of young professionals that are high-performing, quick, global, engaging and more tolerant to diversity than the older workforce. Tapscott (2009, 6-7) explains that there are several characteristics that define Generation Y employees: they value freedom of choice, integrity and speed; they customize, collaborate and innovate. They want to have fun and be entertained, even at work. They are the first generation to grow up in the digital age, so their IT skills and the way they use technology and the Internet differs tremendously from the previous generations.

Recruiters should pay attention to these characteristics. The way the Generation Y workers relate to technology and different media no doubt affects how and where they look for jobs. The Internet is most likely their number one choice and they are likely to find poorly designed websites and complex navigation off-putting. The development of Social Media and easy access to masses of information have led to a more open, global communication, so the younger generation job seekers are also likely to expect transparency and genuine communication from companies. When designing job advertisements, companies should find out what type of work-related values their prospective candidates have and what they are looking for in a job – the factors baby boomers or even Generation X find appealing might leave the Generation Y job seekers cold. The length of the employment itself is a good example: while the older generations tend to prefer the idea of working for the same company their entire lives, the younger workers might prefer gaining experiences from several companies and in various tasks. In 2006, the average worker had 10.8 employees in their lifetime, when 40 years ago they had four. (Jobvite 2010, 2.)

### **2.4.3 War for talent**

According to Foot and Hook (2008, 47-49), skills shortages and difficulties in recruitment have become global issues. The lack of specific skills in different industries or regions is due to several reasons: competitors might be able to offer better compensation or working conditions, or the organization's or industry's reputation might put off candidates. Some occupations might not be as attractive as others. Regional skills shortages might result from high costs of living or poor transportation system, for instance.

Skills shortages and scarce supply of workforce have led to a global situation that can be described as the "war for talent" - a term that implies a sense of urgency and the need for finding and keeping the best employees. Many organizations consider the attracting and retaining of talent to be their primary concern in human resource management today. The ageing workforce brings new challenges and some organizations also report inadequate skills as another pressing issue. The war for talent forces organizations to adapt innovative recruitment methods, and hospitality industry is no differ-

ent than other industries. Recruitment has long been a challenge for the hospitality industry, and the situation is not likely to improve unless organizations are able to improve their employer image and the entire industry reputation and make customer service jobs more attractive to job seekers. The hospitality industry has traditionally suffered from high turnover and poor industry reputation due to the low-status nature of hospitality work, unstable working hours, poor work/life balance, health and safety concerns and seasonality that creates a lack of job security. Another issue is talented customer service workers leaving the hospitality industry to pursue their careers in other industries – customer service skills are easily transferred from one industry to another. (Christensen Hughes & Rog 2008, 745-747.)

Employer image and reputation are also crucial in the war for talent. Employer branding should cover all areas from the organization's mission and values to its culture, policies and the development opportunities it provides its employees. Through employer branding, an organization can communicate its employee value proposition to both current and potential employees. Candidates and current employees have to be able to feel that they benefit from working for the organization. This is why an organization should always consider the job seekers' recruitment drivers and deciding factors when building an employer brand and recruiting: employee value propositions cannot be done based on assumptions of what the job seeker wants. Image and reputation are not only issues the organizations are facing: if the entire industry suffers from poor reputation and is not able to attract talented workforce, building up the entire industry reputation will be just as important as improving employer image. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 501-502; Christensen Hughes and Rog 2008, 753.)



### **3 Social media and recruitment**

Social Media is a broad concept that encompasses thousands of applications and tools. It has been said to bring challenges and opportunities to organizations, and companies might find themselves somewhat baffled by the effect it has on business operations. Even though Social Media is a crucial issue for organizations today, many companies are not yet comfortable acting in a world where they are not able to control the information available about them. Furthermore, its potential for recruitment and other areas of human resources is often still overlooked. Some companies might even consider Social Media a trend that is likely to see a downfall in the future, or alternatively they might be waiting for applications to evolve and develop and for other organizations to start using them first. However, the most successful companies are usually not the ones that wait until everyone else is doing it, but the ones that are quick to react and adapt to changes in their environment. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 59-60; Sambhi 2011, 35.)

The idea behind Social Media is not exactly groundbreaking, but for organizations to be able to make use of it, it is worthwhile to look into its characteristics. In the following section of this thesis the aim is to first define Social Media and some of its characteristics. I will then take a closer look at different Social Media applications and the use of Social Media as a recruitment channel, especially from the hospitality industry's point of view. Finally, in the main part of this chapter I will look into one of the issues many organizations might be worried about: risks and reputation management in Social Media. This chapter will provide a framework for the study that was conducted among Finnish hospitality students and for the study results that will be presented later on in this thesis.

#### **3.1 Defining Social Media**

There are without a doubt various different ways to define Social Media. Some might argue that everything you find on the Internet these days can be categorized as Social Media, making the online world and Social Media synonyms. However, this definition in its vagueness says very little about the nature of Social Media. A more descriptive

definition is provided by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 60-62): Social Media can be defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". This definition differentiates Social Media from other closely related concepts, Web 2.0 and User Generated Content.

### **3.1.1 Social Media, Web 2.0 and User Generated Content**

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 60) claim that Social Media is nothing new in the world of virtual content sharing – it actually takes the Internet back to its original roots. Peer-to-peer content has been shared since the 70's – the first systems allowed for users to exchange messages and can be seen as the precursors of the World Wide Web. The earliest social networking site was created in 1998; however the term "Social Media" itself was not originated until the creation of MySpace (2003) and Facebook (2004). What fundamentally differentiate Social Media from its predecessors are today's technical solutions that enable the creation of versatile and widespread platforms and applications, and the number of people using those applications.

In defining Social Media Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 60) point out that it is important to be able to make out the differences between Social Media, Web 2.0 and User Generated Content. Even though these three concepts bear a relation, they cannot be used as synonyms. Web 2.0 is the Internet we know today. What differentiates it from predecessors Web 1.0 and Web 1.5 are interactivity, intelligent user interfaces and rich multimedia. Whereas the Web 1.0 was about individual users publishing, sharing and modifying content online in a one-way fashion, Web 2.0 is about users being able to continuously share and modify content in a way that is participatory and collaborative. Web 2.0 can be seen as the platform from which Social Media evolved. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 13-14.)

If Web 2.0 is the technological platform for Social Media, User Generated Content can be described as the way in which people utilize Social Media. User Generated Content by definition means content created by end-users and published on a publicly accessible website or on a social networking site. This definition excludes content published

by organizations for commercial purposes, for instance. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 61; Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 35-36.)

### **3.1.2 The nature of Social Media**

The Internet today is characterized by speed, easy searching and a broad and rapid spread of information. Social Media is active and extremely fast-moving, which makes it difficult to control and predict. As a medium it is about networking and a sense of community, and can also be seen as an extension of word-of-mouth. Today's fast and global access to Internet and new interactive technologies allow for people around the world to connect with each other via countless Social Media applications in ways that were not quite as possible in the age of Web 1.0. Organizations might find this challenging as it eventually means that people can link up with each other globally, relying more on peer-to-peer information and less on information provided by organizations. People have always connected with each other and exchanged experiences, but the new interactive technologies have taken networking to an entirely new level. (Aula 2010, 44; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 64-65, Li & Bernhoff 2008, 9-11; Strategic Direction 2010, 6.)

Sharing content and participating in Social Media is a dialogue: it is about joined effort and collaboration rather than unconnected, isolated individuals. This interactivity leads to a minimal publishing threshold making it easier and widely acceptable for Internet users to openly take part in conversations and publish data, such as comments, photos or videos. As dialogue is at the very core of Social Media, it is quite apparent that social behavior and two-way communication are expected of organizations as well. Organizations are not likely to see an increase in followers or subscribers if their strategy is to keep pushing traditional marketing messages via Social Media. Engagement, whether it is customer engagement or employee engagement, can be improved by keeping in mind the social aspect: listening, reacting, discussing. (Aula 2010, 43-44; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 65; Laine, T. 20.4.2011.)

A genuine dialogue requires integrity. As Tapscott (2009, 6-7) explains, integrity and transparency are highly valued by the Generation Y. Organizations today are facing a

challenge most of them have never had to deal with before, at least not to the same extent: demand for corporate transparency. Internet users expect honesty and integrity from organizations participating in different types of Social Media applications, and this demand should not be taken too lightly. As traditional PR does not work very well in Social Media, it is evident that to avoid reputational risks, an organization has to be good – it isn't enough to look good.

The nature of Social Media should be kept in mind when recruiting in Social Media, same as when marketing or planning any other activities in it. The aim is to create positive buzz around the company and engaging users while respecting the rules and being honest. Internet users today are web literate and critical, and are often capable of reading between the lines and spotting false information. This means deleting critical comments or using anonymous accounts to boost reputation, for instance, usually does not go unnoticed. It is advisable not to outsource content production, as it will affect how genuine the company appears in Social Media. Having said that, there are technical processes that can be outsourced – in recruitment as well – but the content should be produced by the company itself. As for honesty, professionals tend to believe that Social Media users are quite forgiving and understanding if an organization makes a mistake that ends up in Social Media, as long as it is willing to give honest replies to critical comments instead of trying to hide the issue. Chapter 4.3. will address the issues of risk and reputation management in Social Media. (Aula 2010, 46; Laine, T. 20.4.2011; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 66-67.)

For a company to participate in Social Media, it pays to be active and social. However, this does not mean that companies should instantly start creating content - participating and listening without actively creating a buzz might be worthwhile compared to simply opting not to participate at all – which today is often not an alternative, as most organizations in some way are already a part of Social Media discussions whether or not they choose to. A general rule of thumb in Social Media in terms of activity is that 1 % of users are the ones who create original content, 80 % of users register and occasionally read other users' messages but overall are quite passive, and the remaining 19 % are users who react, comment, “like”, retweet and subscribe but do not often create content themselves. The same rule can be applied to companies as well – when partici-

pating in Social Media, the focus in the beginning can very well be on listening to others, and finding out which channels are worth trying and what kind of discussions are going on in Social Media. As for recruitment activities, simply posting job advertisements might be worthwhile as well, even though in long-term it is thought to be profitable to somehow engage users and get them to share your message to others. (Laine, T. 20.4.2011.)

### **3.1.3 Kaplan and Haenlein's classification of Social Media**

The development and nature of Social Media were explained above. To further classify what Social Media is and to understand the distinctions between different types of Social Media, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 61-62) divide Social Media applications and platforms into six categories by determining their level of social presence, media richness, self-presentation and self-disclosure. The first two notions come from the field of media research, and self-presentation and self-disclosure have to do with social processes. As previously mentioned, Social Media can be defined and classified in various different ways. In this thesis, Kaplan and Haenlein's classification was chosen as it provides a theoretical approach and has been widely used to describe Social Media.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 61), the social presence theory states that the level of social presence varies in different types of media. Social presence is higher in inter-personal contact (e.g. face-to-face conversation) than in mediated contact (e.g. phone conversation), and similarly it is considered higher in synchronous contact (e.g. live chat) than in asynchronous contact (e.g. e-mails). Media richness theory on the other hand claims that any type of communication is an attempt to resolve ambiguity and uncertainty, and some media are more effective in doing this than others.

According to self-presentation theory, people attempt to control and influence how they are perceived by others in any type of social interactions. The desire to make a positive impression and create an image that is consistent with one's personal identity is done through self-disclosure, which means consciously or unconsciously revealing personal information. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 62.)

These four concepts can be taken into account when determining how to classify different types of Social Media. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 62) consider collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds to be the six different Social Media. They can be categorized with respect to their level of social presence and media richness as well as self-presentation and self-disclosure.

	Low social presence/media richness	Medium social presence/media richness	High social presence/media richness
High self-presentation/self-disclosure	Blogs	Social networking sites	Virtual social worlds
Low self-presentation/self-disclosure	Collaborative projects	Content communities	Virtual game worlds

Graph 2. Social Media categories classified according to their level of social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 62.)

The table indicates that collaborative projects such as Wikis have the lowest level of social presence and media richness as well as self-presentation and self-closure. They are based on simple exchange of information and a joint effort of multiple participants, and are considered the most democratic form of User Generated Content. Companies can for instance use internal wikis to keep their employees updated. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 62-63.)

Blogs also tend to have a low level of social presence and media richness but they are thought to be higher in self-presentation and self-disclosure. They can be used in the corporate world for improving transparency and updating interest groups, and even

though they are generally managed by individuals, they do allow interaction as others can participate by posting comments. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 63.)

Content communities aim to share media content, such as videos or presentations, between users. While content communities can be used for entertainment value, they can also be viable media for businesses for both marketing and human resources related purposes. Content communities are considered to have a medium level of social presence and media richness, but their self-presentation and self-disclosure is still relatively low compared to that of social networking sites such as Facebook. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 63.)

Social networking sites enable users to connect with each other, share information and content and communicate via e-mails and instant messaging. Social networking sites can be used for sharing practically any type of content from personal information to photos, videos, audio files and blogs. Just like content communities, they are considered to have a medium level of social presence and media richness, but their level of self-presentation and self-disclosure is higher than that of content communities. This means that users tend to reveal more about themselves and often aim at improving the perception others have of them. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 62-64.)

Virtual worlds can be divided into virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds. These three-dimensional worlds have a high level of social presence and media richness as they allow for users to interact with each other in the form of avatars the same way they would in real life. In virtual game worlds, the rules concerning behavior tend to be somewhat strict, which limits the degree of self-presentation and self-disclosure. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 64.)

Virtual social worlds let their users act and communicate more freely than virtual game worlds without having the application set any boundaries or rules other than the basic physical laws such as gravity. Having a high level of social presence and media richness as well as self-presentation and self-disclosure makes virtual social worlds essentially the ultimate Social Media. Second Life is quite possibly the most well-known and wide-

spread virtual social world, allowing for its users to do everything that is possible in real life. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 64.)

### **3.2 Social Media as a recruitment channel**

All six categories of Social Media – collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds – can be utilized in human resources, even though it is worthwhile noticing that some are better suited for recruitment activities than others. Sambhi (2011, 35) states that the possibilities of using Social Media in human resource management are versatile: besides recruitment, it can be used for employee engagement, labor relations, organizational and individual development and total rewards. It can be used as a tool for improving productivity and innovation as well as a platform for training. It can be useful for reaching out to a large yet specific target group such as graduates or students in specific schools or current team members. A Social Media campaign – whether it is for recruiting or marketing purposes, can create a buzz and go viral with user sharing content and passing it along to friends.

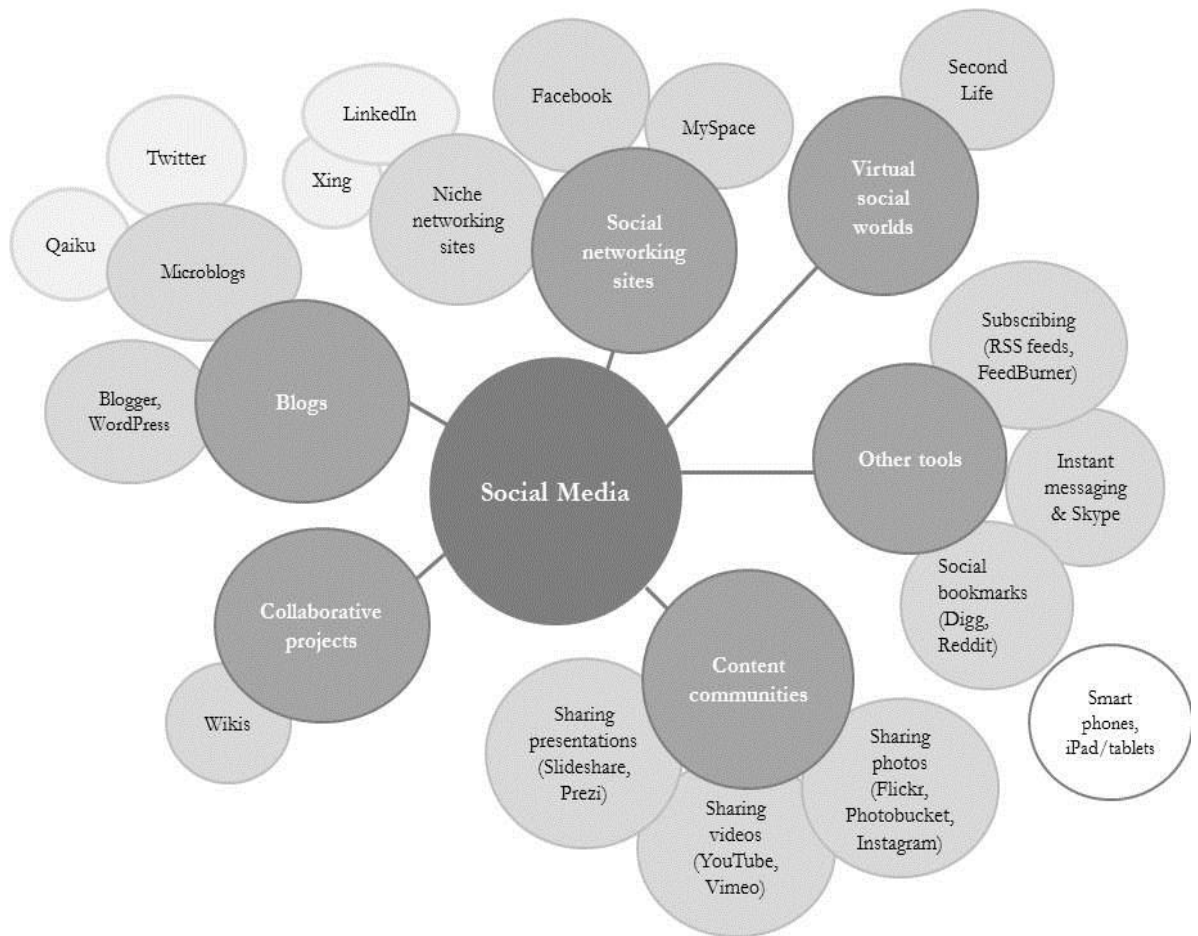
When it comes to recruiting via Social Media, careful consideration should be given to various factors: the industry, the location, the type of people the organization is looking to attract and obviously the differences between Social Media applications. Location matters as well: not all Social Media applications are commonly used in Finland, and not all of them support internal or external recruitment activities. Even the applications most suitable for recruiting might not lead to successful hires if the organization lacks understanding of how to use them. One must also keep in mind that the world of Social Media is ever-changing – new applications are constantly created while some of the older ones may begin to lose ground.

The aim of this chapter is to take a closer look at some of the main applications within five of Kaplan and Haenlein's Social Media categories and provide an understanding of their potential for recruitment purposes. Virtual game worlds have been excluded from this chapter and the study as they were considered the least profitable recruitment



channel for the hospitality industry in Finland. Between the five categories, it is clear that there are applications that support recruitment activities, just as there are ones that may to some extent be of use or may not be suitable for recruitment purposes at all.

The below graph illustrates some of the Social Media tools and applications used in Finland, divided into Kaplan and Haenlein's categories and in some cases, sub-categories such as micro blogs:



Graph 3. Social Media applications and tools

This graph is a simplified illustration as obviously there are countless other applications within each category that are widely used all over the world. Applications such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn are examples of each category. Most of them will be used in the questionnaire when asking the hospitality students which channels they have heard of and which channels they use either for personal or work-related reasons. The sixth category in the above graph is “other tools” - this was added to demonstrate

some of the tools that do not fall into Kaplan and Haenlein's categories but are nevertheless closely connected to Social Media and can be used for recruitment purposes. Devices such as smart phones, iPads and tablet PC's are also placed in the graph and included in the questionnaire, as they provide a means of connecting to the Internet and Social Media applications.

### **3.2.1 Blogs**

Blogs in this case include both regular blogs, such as Blogger and WordPress, as well as microblogging sites such as Twitter. Regular blogs can be written by individuals or by organizations – corporate blogs can be used for marketing, branding, PR and communicating with customers, for instance. Blogs usually include the blogger's thoughts and ideas, and may contain photos, video or audio as well. Through comments, the blogger is able to communicate with readers and thus keep up a dialogue instead of simply writing a journal or reporting. A corporate blog could be written by one or several of the managers as a means of keeping in contact with customers and stakeholders. While blogs perhaps are not the most convenient or typical channel for recruitment, they can be used for instance for employer branding, networking and following what other blog-writing industry professionals are doing – in this sense it might also be possible to reach potential employees via blogs. (Safko & Brake 2009, 167-168.)

Twitter is no doubt more useful for recruitment purposes than blogging. Twitter is a microblogging site allowing users to share – tweet - short messages, follow others and retweet or quote other users' messages. The power, from the recruiter's perspective, is obviously in the "retweets". Companies can update job advertisements and other news instantly via tweets, and have their followers retweet the messages so that they spread to a larger audience. The site does not allow lengthy messages, but writing a short message together with a link to the full job advertisement might reach specific interest groups in real time and thus be extremely fast compared to some of the traditional recruitment channels. According to the 2010 Social Recruiting Report (Jobvite 2010, 4-5) that surveyed over 600 US recruiters and HR professionals, 14.2 % had hired through Twitter, and the main uses of Twitter were referrals, publishing jobs and promoting

brand. Qaiku is a Finnish microblogging site similar to Twitter, although obviously not quite as well-known. (Laine, T. 20.4.2011; Safko & Brake 2009, 535-536.)

### **3.2.2 Content communities**

Content communities consist of applications that allow users to share data in the form of videos, photos and presentations, for instance. YouTube is no doubt the most well-known example of a content community. It is an entertainment site that reaches millions of users every day. While most of the videos are shared for entertainment purposes, it can be used for HR purposes as well; especially for employer branding and creating brand awareness online. (Safko & Brake 2009, 529-530; Sambhi 2011, 35.)

Other content communities include photo sharing communities such as Flickr, Photobucket and Instagram and applications for sharing presentations such as Slideshare and Prezi. Just as videos, photos are a way of visualizing web content and making it more personal. Photo sharing applications can be used in a similar way; for developing employer image and thus affecting recruitment. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 60-61.)

### **3.2.3 Social networking sites**

Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Xing represent some of the countless social networking sites. The two latter can be categorized as niche networking sites, as their focus is on career opportunities and connecting professionals from various different industries around the world.

Facebook is undeniably the most popular social networking site with over 900 million users. It offers companies countless features that can be used for marketing, sales, PR and HR purposes. When recruiting via Social Media, the advantages come from the large number of users, possibility to target messages to specific interest groups and the ease of sharing and “liking” information so that it will reach a larger audience. These features make Facebook a viable tool for referrals, and HR professionals also report to use it to do research on candidates. While MySpace is another globally used social networking site, it does not support recruitment activities in a way that Facebook does,

and is not very commonly used for recruitment. (Jobvite 2010, 3-5; Laine, T. 20.4.2011.)

As for the career-centered niche networking sites, LinkedIn offers professionals and job seekers around the world both free accounts and paid premium accounts. It allows companies to find out what kind of skills and background job seekers have, who they currently work for and whether they are looking for a new job. It can be used for publishing jobs as well as networking, referrals and for doing research on candidates. LinkedIn is mainly focused on specialists as well as middle and upper management, which might explain why the hospitality industry has been somewhat slower to participate than some other industries. Xing is a site similar to LinkedIn, but with a focus on the German-speaking part of Europe, and not very well known in Finland. (Jobvite 2010, 5; Laine, T. 20.4.2011; Sambhi 2011, 35.)

#### **3.2.4 Virtual social worlds**

Virtual social worlds are three-dimensional, game-like worlds where people communicate as avatars. Second Life, which was launched on 2003, is possibly the most popular platform in this category, and one that allows companies to participate as well. The simulated environment can be used to represent the real world, enabling all aspects of business from marketing, sales and PR to various areas of human resources. From the recruiter's viewpoint, Second Life offers possibilities such as one-on-one communications, networking and interviews through video conferencing. It might also be used to create brand recognition. (Safko & Brake 2009, 311-317.)

#### **3.2.5 Collaborative projects**

Wikipedia and other wikis can be classified as collaborative projects. They enable users to share and cross-link information in a way that is collaborative – every user can add and edit information. Companies may create internal wikis in order to share knowledge and enable the collaboration between colleagues and departments – internal recruitment can be done via wikis as well. As for external recruitment, wikis generally do not support recruitment activities. Any information share via wikis can be modified by single users, leading to a risk of facts potentially being manipulated. However it is still

advisable for companies to keep wikis in mind – for job seekers, they may be one of the sources when looking for information about companies, and the information provided in wikis should obviously be as accurate as possible. False information should be corrected, but companies are strongly advised against falsifying facts in order to appear more attractive. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 46-47.)

### **3.2.6 Other tools and devices**

Subscribing, social bookmarking and interpersonal applications such as Skype and messengers do not naturally fall into any of the five Social Media categories presented above, even though some sources do classify them as Social Media. They bear a close connection and are unquestionably part of the participatory Web 2.0. Smart phones and iPads, on the other hand, are means of connecting to Web 2.0 and different Social Media applications.

Subscribing and social bookmarking both allow users to manage the information they find online. Subscribing can be done via web-feed formats that are used to publish frequently updated websites, giving Internet users easy access to any new content. In practice this means that the company, for instance, enables subscribing on the company website or blog, and by subscribing the reader will receive instant notifications when new data has been added. As for social bookmarks such as Digg, Reddit or Delicious, companies can enable the use of social bookmarking sites and allow visitors to share what they have read on the company website, and tag the story or data for future reference. When recruiting online, these channels could mean that a job seeker can easily subscribe to any new job advertisements as well as mark them and share them via social bookmarking. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 54-55; Tulgan 2007, 3.)

Skype and messengers are interpersonal applications allowing users to connect in real time and enabling web conferencing. Skype can be used for free national or international phone calls online, with the possibility of using video simultaneously. Messengers offer global instant messaging, and like Skype, video connection can also be added. These applications can be used for giving job seekers a possibility to connect with

the recruiter or the prospective supervisor for more information, or for interviewing candidates online by using video. (Safko & Brake 2009, 419.)

### **3.3 Reputation and risk management**

Recruiting or planning any other corporate activities in Social Media does not come without risks. As previously mentioned, the nature of Social Media differs somewhat from traditional media. Interactivity, dialogue and users sharing peer-to-peer information are issues companies may not yet be accustomed to. The era of Social Media may impose risks to corporate image or employer image, but rather than seeing those risks as threats, a company should strive for reacting to them, and creating a positive presence online – while embracing the fact that when it comes to Social Media, not all can be controlled or predicted. Publications regarding reputation risks in Social Media most often deal with corporate reputation, not employer reputation, but the theories behind them can naturally be extended to human resources as well.

When recruiting in Social Media, the risks involved can be divided into reputational risks or other types of risks, such as security or equality issues. However, as mentioned above, these risks are not necessarily synonyms for threats. Companies can use Social Media for employer branding to improve employer reputation, which might yield in better candidates, more satisfied employees and lower turnover. As for security or equality issues, they will only pose threats if handled poorly.

#### **3.3.1 Reputation management and employer branding**

Reputation risk is one of the operative risks organizations should pay attention to. Aula (2010, 44) states that problems for instance in internal operations, systems or people might cause direct or indirect losses to an organization, affecting competitiveness and positioning. When employer reputation is on the line, the losses might come from not being able to retain satisfied employees or attract new ones.

Social Media can without a doubt increase reputation risks. People use Social Media platforms to link up with each other, relying on peer-to-peer information rather than

information provided by companies. For consumers, Social Media today is a more trustworthy source of information than any press releases or advertisements produced by companies. Over 60 % of the population already uses Social Media to find peer-to-peer information about products – this no doubt can be applied to job seeking as well, emphasizing the significance of referrals. (Aula 2010, 45; Strategic Direction 2010, 7; Laine, T. 20.4.2011.)

The risk organizations face in the era of Social Media comes from all users being able to share any type of information. It is not necessarily verified or true – if it spreads online, it quickly becomes the new collective truth possibly creating negative publicity for a company. Reputation management from the company's viewpoint means aiming at creating a favorable image of the company and sharing with the public its views on what it wants to be and achieve. However, the views of Social Media users can greatly differ from the company's ideas about itself, creating confusion and possibly damaging the company's reputation. As mentioned previously, it is extremely difficult for companies to predict and control conversations about themselves – however this does not automatically mean that any control cannot or should not be done. Presence, attendance or omnipresence (continuous interaction with the public) can be far better strategies than absence. It is worthwhile to bear in mind, though, that a reputation risk might occur also if a company chooses to correct the false information about them and improve their reputation by attempting to manipulate facts in their favor or by not giving genuine responses. (Aula 2010, 45-48.)

A German fashion jewellery and accessories brand as well as a Finnish recruitment agency are examples of how negative publicity spreads quickly online, creating a reputational risk. Both cases no doubt effected employees' and potential job seekers' perceptions of these companies at the time. In the first case, an employee had after resigning, but while still working for the company, created a page on Facebook in 2009 that urged Social Media users to boycott the accessories brand. The employee openly criticized the company's way of treating its employees. The company sued the employee on the grounds of breaking the Employment Contracts Act (by criticizing her employer online), but the court case was ruled in the employee's favor. The employee had indeed broken the Employment Contracts Act but as opposed to the company's arguments,

the allegations that spread online were actually true. Without going further into any of the allegations or the ruling, this type of publicity most likely affected the company's reputation as an employer, and functions as a good example of how difficult it is to control the messages that spread online – whether they are true or false. (Saaritsa 2011.)

A Finnish recruitment agency also had its share of open criticism online in 2010 when a corporate trainer, consultant and an active blogger shared a conversation she had heard while on the train. A person representing the recruitment agency had openly discussed a job seeker's issues on the train, and not in the most favorable manner. While some questioned the bloggers motives to share such a story without simply contacting the recruitment agency first, the link to her blog spread instantly on Facebook and many were willing to judge the recruitment agency based on the behavior of the agent. Some readers informed that they will never want to work for the company in question, and that the way this company handles recruitment is unprofessional. A few days later, one of the managers of the company wrote a public apologize to the blog's comments section, receiving thanks from many of the readers, who felt as though the issue was well handled. This reply most likely decreased the reputation risk – as previously mentioned, Social Media users tend to be quite forgiving when faced with honesty and a genuine reaction. (Kortesuo 2010.)

These two cases are examples of how Social Media might create a reputation risk for a company. However, Social Media does not only pose threats – it provides opportunities as well. Companies might benefit from learning how to use it and how to react to comments or arguments in a positive manner. Tulgan (2007, 3) reminds that Social Media can be a great tool for employer branding, should companies be able to create a positive presence online – especially in those Social Media platforms and applications from which they hope to recruit candidates in the future.

Employer branding, as Backhaus and Tikoo (2004, 501-502) explain, is increasingly important to companies as it helps current and prospective employees internalize company values and mission, improves employee retention and gives company a competitive advantage. Employer branding is a means of informing current and prospec-



tive employees how they benefit from working for the company, and why it is a desirable employer. It can be coordinated with product or corporate branding to create a cohesive image of the company.

When recruiting new employees, employer branding could mean sharing information about the company's organizational culture, career development opportunities as well as potential challenges. The information shared should obviously be honest, accurate and sufficient in order not to give job seekers a misguided perception of the company. Studies show that turnover, job satisfaction, organizational trust and the quality of job performance correlate to the employees' feelings of how consistent the portrayed image and the reality is, and how well the company has kept its end of the psychological contract and obligations. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505-506.)

When planning any employer branding activities, it is worthwhile to find out what kind of conversations the company is a part of – how people talk about it online, for instance. In this sense, it is reasonable to participate in Social Media even if it's only to follow and listen to others and not to actively share content. After all, employed branding might not be successful if the image portrayed to the public differed greatly from the true or false information about the company. Any inconsistencies might lead to a reputation risk and result in job seekers not seeing the company as good place to work in. The same kind of inconsistency could come from the employer brand image not being in line with the corporate brand image. (Aula 2010, 45; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 509.)

### **3.3.2 Security issues and other risks**

Besides reputational risks, there are a few other factors to consider when using Social Media as a recruitment channel. One of the primary concerns is that the access to a great amount of applicants may lead to an overload – the number of unsuitable applicants is likely to grow as well. To help minimize the risk, job ads posted online should be designed using the same careful consideration as when designing job ads for traditional media. This however does not mean that print ads should be transferred to the

internet as such – rather that the nature of the recruitment channel and the technical features and possibilities should be considered. (Dessler 2011, 188-189.)

Other concerns regarding web-based recruitment or recruitment via Social Media are mainly confidentiality, security and equality related issues. Job seekers have to be able to trust that their applications, CV's and all personal information will be handled in a secure way and that their privacy rights will not be violated. Both organizations and job seekers might come across cheating as the internet might make it easier for people and organizations to give false information. Equality and discrimination are fair concerns as well – not everyone has access to internet nor does everyone wish to use Social Media tools, for instance. Using only web-based recruitment might exclude some prospective candidates. Even though web literacy can be expected from a major part of the workforce these days, there are minorities and older generation workers that do not have access to it. (Dessler 2011, 188–189; Foot & Hook 2008, 161; McKenna & Beech 2008, 188.)

As for security and privacy protection, Laine (20.4.2011) reminds that while Social Media obviously is a tempting channel for different types of impostors and scams, the fear of fraud can be diminished by safe operations and sound judgment. Some Social Media applications are no doubt safer than others – for instance LinkedIn can be considered safer than Facebook, as it does not allow very many third party applications and is less open than Facebook. When recruiting in Social Media, confidentiality and security do not need to be compromised any more than they would be when recruiting via traditional recruitment channels. A company does not need to create a separate application or tool to recruit in Social Media, and generally it is advised that the return channel is a different medium. This means that while there are versatile uses to Social Media in recruitment, applications and CV's should still be sent via another route – e-mail or company website, for instance. Most Social Media channels do not yet support the sending of applications and CV's. Obviously, if all confidential information is sent via another channel, the risk of violating the job seekers' privacy and security is not significant.

## **4 Research methodology**

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to obtain data on how students use Social Media for job seeking and career development, and what their perceptions of Social Media are. In this study, current hospitality industry students were identified as potential job seekers – they are the future professionals who might already be looking for jobs in the hospitality industry. They will move on to work life latest when they graduate so it is crucial for companies in the hospitality industry to understand how to reach and recruit them. As these current hospitality students are the ones that have grown up in the digital age, most of them are no doubt active Internet and social media users. In this sense, it is reasonable to assume that recruiters could reach them via Internet and different Social Media channels.

### **4.1 Data collection**

In order to understand the students' job seeking behavior and opinions about Social Media, I chose to use the survey strategy. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003, 92) explain, surveys such as questionnaires and structured interviews are good tools for collecting data from a large number of people in a standardized, easily comparable and economical way. As the aim of my study was to understand the hospitality industry students' views on Social Media as a recruiting channel, I concluded that an online questionnaire would be a more suitable technique than a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, for instance. In an online questionnaire, a person – in this case the student - is asked to respond to a set of questions that is the same for each respondent. The questionnaire can be sent via e-mail as a public link. This type of self-administered research method is a practical tool for collecting responses if the sample chosen is large and if the respondents are Internet users who find the subject of the study interesting (Saunders et al. 2003, 280-284).

The population studied consisted of Finnish and international hospitality industry students studying in Finnish colleges (vocational schools) and universities of applied sciences (polytechnics). The schools participating in this study were selected randomly. The entire country was first divided into four regions: South, North, East and West.

Five vocational schools and five polytechnics were randomly picked so that there were two vocational schools and two polytechnics picked from Southern Finland and one vocational school as well as one polytechnic picked from every other region. The decision to emphasize Southern Finland was based on a request from the study's original initiator, as 80 % of company's work force is needed in Greater Helsinki and other parts of Southern Finland.

I contacted the randomly selected 10 schools in April 2011. The people contacted included Research Directors, Heads of Degree Programmes, Heads of Education Sector, Directors of Development and Vice Presidents. Most of the schools replied that the subject of the study is vital: social media seems to be the topic of the day, and it is crucial for companies to understand how today's students – tomorrow's professionals – can be reached and recruited. Nine out of 10 initially selected schools granted permission to survey their students, and a new school was selected to replace the one vocational school that declined due to not being able to partake in the study in the timeframe given (during May).

The schools that participated in the study all offer education that leads to a degree in the hospitality industry. The vocational schools offer upper secondary level education in hotel, restaurant, tourism and catering related programmes. Universities of applied sciences, or polytechnics, offer degree programmes that lead to a Bachelor's Degree in the hospitality industry (Restonomi AMK). In total, the 10 schools chosen offered 18 hospitality degree programmes in spring 2011.

The online questionnaire (Appendices 1 & 2) was created using Webropol. It was tested by people who already had a hospitality degree and were currently employed in the hospitality industry, as well as people with experience in digital media. Scandic Finland's Human Resources Manager and two lecturers at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences also tested the questionnaire. Public links to the questionnaire together with a cover letter were sent to the participating schools in the beginning of May 2011, and the directors or in some cases the student affairs offices distributed them to the students via e-mail. The questionnaire was open for two weeks, but most of the stu-

dents had approximately 10 days to answer it. The questionnaire was available in Finnish and (Appendix 1) English (Appendix 2).

The questionnaire began with questions about the respondent's background information. The information considered essential to the study included the respondent's gender, age, education (school, programme and years studied) as well as current employment. The questionnaire then progressed into questions regarding the channels used when looking for information about companies or applying for jobs. Respondents were then asked to answer questions regarding their use of different social media applications, their opinions on social media in general and the functions they would like to use when looking for job opportunities via social media. They were also asked to share their views on the advantages and disadvantages of using social media tools in recruitment, pick the factors most important to them when choosing a job and ideate how they would market open positions in the hospitality industry. The questionnaire ended with two questions about the respondents' relationship with the study's original initiator. These last two questions were not mandatory as the aim of the study is to benefit the entire hospitality industry; however they were added in the questionnaire as they were of interest to the study's initiator.

Even though the questionnaire was sent to 10 schools, only nine schools ended up participating in it. This was noticed while analyzing the results. The exact sample size is unfortunately not known as three out of nine schools did not inform the number of students they had sent the questionnaire to. The six schools that informed their numbers make up a total of 2046 students, making the estimated sample size approximately 2500.

The answers were retrieved from Webropol and saved as an Excel sheet. The data was then imported from Excel to SPSS for quantitative analysis. The answers to two of the questions were not imported to SPSS as quantitative analysis was considered a more appropriate method for analyzing them. These two questions dealt with the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media and how jobs in the hospitality industry should be advertised from the student's viewpoint.

## 4.2 Research methods

The online questionnaire was the only method for collecting data, but the responses were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. This type of a mixed-method study can be seen as triangulation or complementarity, where both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in order to gain a more accurate, elaborated understanding of the subject studied. Triangulation refers to the use of multi-method strategy which aims at enhancing the validity of the results. There are a few different ways of using mixed methods; in this study only one data collection method (online questionnaire) was used, but the data collected was analyzed and interpreted using multi-methods. (Bryman 2006, 97-113; Plano Clark & Creswell 2008, 123-127.)

According to Saunders et al. (2003, 287-288), the data collected through questionnaires consist of the respondents' attributes, behavior and opinions. The attributes in the study included characteristics such as the respondent's gender, age and education. Behavioral variables had to do with the respondents' use of job seeking channels and different Social Media tools. They were also asked to share their opinions on Social Media and on their job selection criteria. These different variables – attributes, behavior and opinions – were analyzed using quantitative analysis to provide measurable information and descriptive statistics. The data was presented as frequency tables, and means were calculated to measure central tendency among the respondents in one particular question.

Quantitative methods provide standardized data that indicate the respondents' attributes, behavior and opinion. However complementing numeric data with a qualitative method enriches the study and leads to more in-depth, holistic understanding of how Social Media could be used in recruitment. As Social Media is still a relatively new recruiting channel, gaining a deeper insight from those who participate in it – or those who choose not to participate in it – improves the quality of the study and might generate new ideas for recruiters in the hospitality industry. Quantitative and qualitative analysis are different ways of approaching the same issue but it is generally thought that qualitative analysis brings the researcher closer to respondents whereas quantitative analysis is more distant (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 12).

The questions that were analyzed using a qualitative method were concerning the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media in recruitment from the students' point of view as well as their opinions on how open positions should be marketed in the hospitality industry. These two questions were open questions where the respondents were able to freely express their opinions. The aim was to categorize the responses by identifying common themes.

### **4.3 Reliability and validity**

Considering the validity and reliability of the survey, there is a possibility that the wording of a few of the questions left room for measurement errors. One background question in particular (regarding the study programmes in which the respondents studied) yielded in inaccurate responses, as the majority of the students in vocational colleges chose a study programme only available in universities of applied sciences. The study programmes were all named correctly; however it was not made clear which of them were upper secondary level study programmes as it was thought that the names of the programmes were sufficient. Some of the questions regarding Social Media could have been explained better as well: as job seeking in Social Media was not something the majority of the students were familiar with and as it was still a very new concept in Finland, it would have perhaps been a good idea to give some examples of what it might mean to seek for jobs via Social Media. The question regarding how students themselves would advertise open positions yielded in a few uninterpretable answers as well, as a few understood the question as how they would market themselves as job seekers in Social Media.

As for coverage and nonresponse issues, the response rate was approximately 21 % with 531 students submitting their responses. It is known that at least one of the schools had students fill out the questionnaire during class, and this shows in the results as well. The response rates in some of the schools varied between 13 % and 25 %, whereas the vocational college that had students fill out the questionnaire during class had a response rate of 36 %. The response rate was thus lower in schools where links were sent out via e-mail but filling out the questionnaire was not administered. In

these schools, it is not known whether the lower response rates were due to students not receiving the link via e-mail or receiving it but choosing not to participate. A non-response error could have occurred if the questionnaire had mainly attracted those who are interested in Social Media and perhaps more active in it, but this did not seem to be the case – the respondents ranged from non-users to active users.

Among the schools that yielded in similar response rates were both vocational colleges and universities of applied sciences – in this sense there was not much variance. The location of the school did not seem to make a difference either: Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences, Tampere College of Services and Savo Vocational College, for instance, all had a very similar response rate even though the schools are in very different parts of the country and are very different in terms of the amount of students. As for gender, 82 % of the respondents were female and 18 % were male. Not all schools advised the percentage of female students, but it is known that in some of the schools, the female population ranged from 65 % to 85 %. At least in some of the schools, it seems women were slightly more active to participate than male – however it is not known if this had significant relevance to the study.



## 5 The results of the study

Out of approximately 2500 students who received the link to the questionnaire, 531 responded, making the response rate approximately 21 %. Apparently at least of the schools that received the questionnaire had students fill it out during class, while other schools simply sent e-mails to their students that contained the cover letter and link to the questionnaire.

### 5.1 Background information

Background information (Appendix 3) collected included the respondents' gender, age, school attended, study programme, years studied and their current employment situation. Out of 531 respondents, 82 % were female and 18 % were male.

As for the age of the students, 47 % were aged between 20-24 and the second biggest age group was 16-19 year olds with 30 %. 13 % of the respondents were aged between 25-29, and the remaining 9 % ranged from 30 year olds to over 50 year olds. Vast majority (70 %) of the respondents was first or second year students. As for the employment situation of the respondents, 46 % were not employed in spring 2011, and 42 % were working part-time. This means that the respondents were mainly younger generation students who were in the beginning or on to their second year of studies, and perhaps were not yet looking for a full-time job. Their views on how open positions should be marketed or their deciding factors, for instance, might differ from the views of those aged between 25-29 or between 30-50+. However, according to research done on the Generation Y, they should also be the most open-minded respondents when it comes to using Social Media in job seeking and career development.

The respondents were asked to choose their current school and study programme. 18 different study programmes were listed, however when analyzing the results, it was obvious that most of the students studying for a upper secondary level degree in the vocational institutes had chosen a study programme that was only available in the universities of applied sciences. The correct names of the study programmes were presented in the questionnaire but for unknown reasons a vast majority had only chosen

between one or two study programmes. The results for that particular question have thus been left out. As for the schools attended, 56 % of the respondents were studying for a Bachelor's Degree in one of the four different universities of applied sciences, while 44 % students were aiming for a degree in one of the five vocational schools.

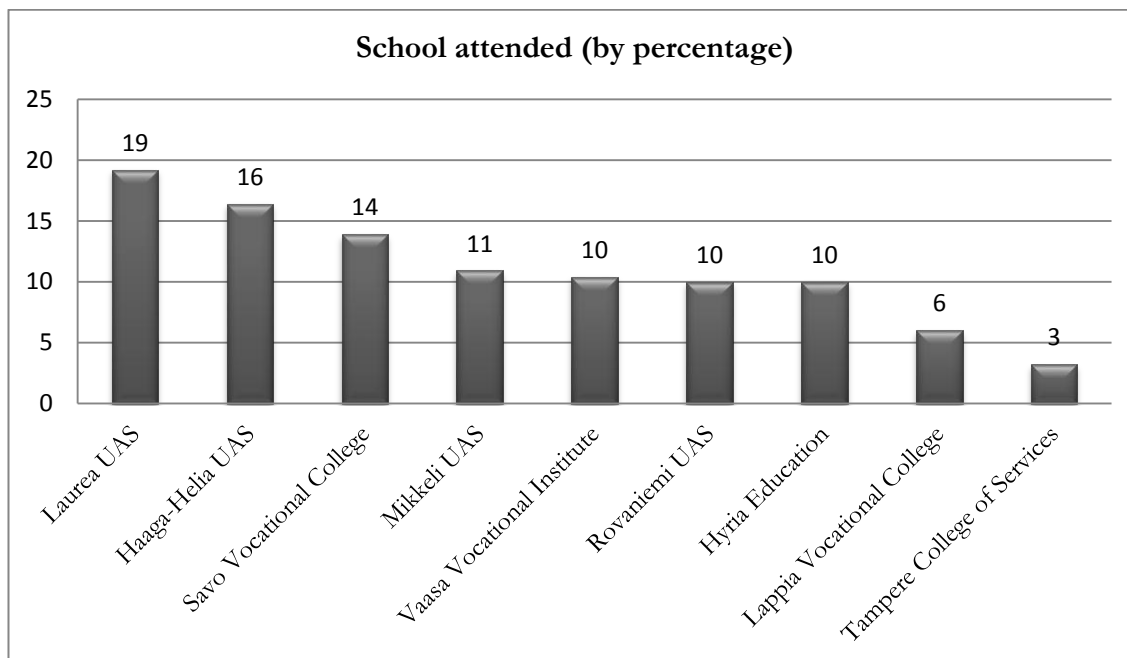


Chart 1. Schools attended by percentage. N = 531.

## 5.2 Job seeking channels

Finding information about job opportunities and companies and applying for jobs were divided into two questions in this study. Often the channel through which the application is sent is not the same channel where the job seeker has learned about the company or the vacant position. Advertisements in newspapers, industry magazines, TV or the company's Facebook page might refer to the company website where the applicant can fill out an application letter and submit a CV, for instance. The idea behind separating the job seeking channels into two questions was to find out which the channels most commonly used in Finland are, and which channels possess the most potential in a sense that students have already used them or are likely to use them when applying for jobs.

### 5.2.1 The sources of information about jobs and companies

The results to the first question – where do hospitality students in Finland go looking for information about open positions and companies – were somewhat expected. Mol.fi or the employment offices were used by 82 % of the respondents. Company website came in second with 67 % of the respondents visiting these websites directly to look for information about jobs. Over 56 % reported that they received information about companies and jobs from friends and other personal networks, and 49 % relied on newspaper job ads. Social Media was in spring 2011 only used by 15 % of the respondents, with channels such as recruitment fairs, career events, TV, radio and industry magazines falling behind it.

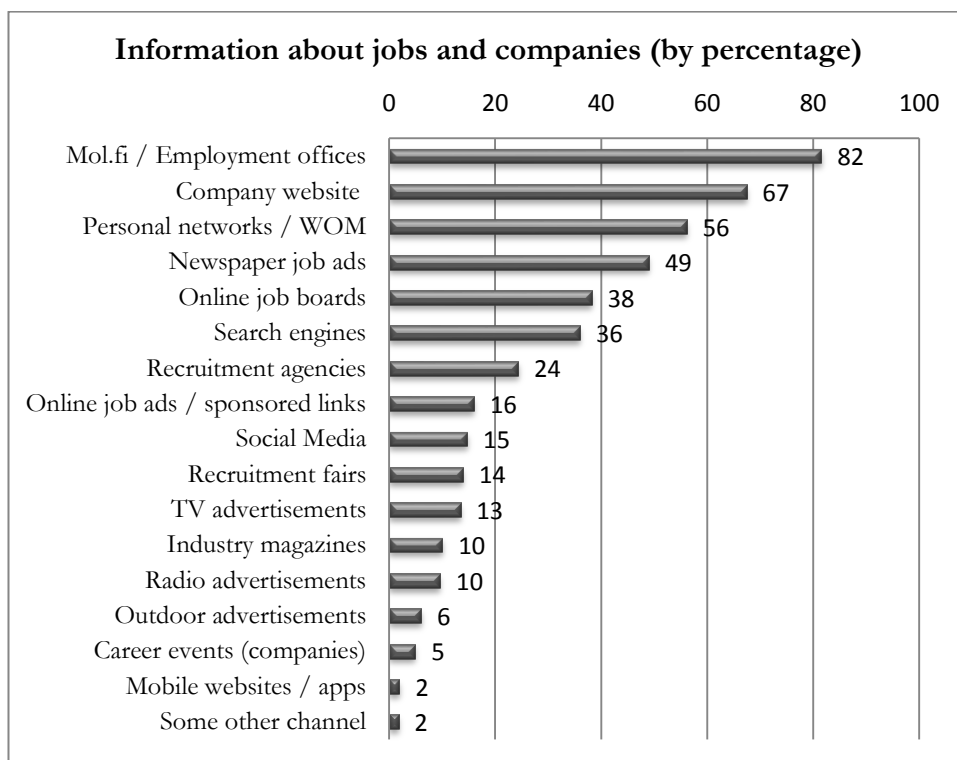


Chart 2. The sources of information about jobs and companies by percentage. N =531.

### 5.2.2 Channels used when applying for jobs

As for applying for jobs, the open application was the most popular with only 4 % who had not already used it or were not likely to use it. Mol.fi, company websites and personal networks were ranked high in applying for jobs as well. Even though not yet very commonly used, online job boards and portals (such as Oikotie, Monster, Uranus,

Jobstep and Heebo) were chosen by approximately 50 % of the respondents as channels through which they are likely to apply for jobs in the future. Social Media was the second least likely channel, with mobile websites and mobile applications seen as the least likely channel.

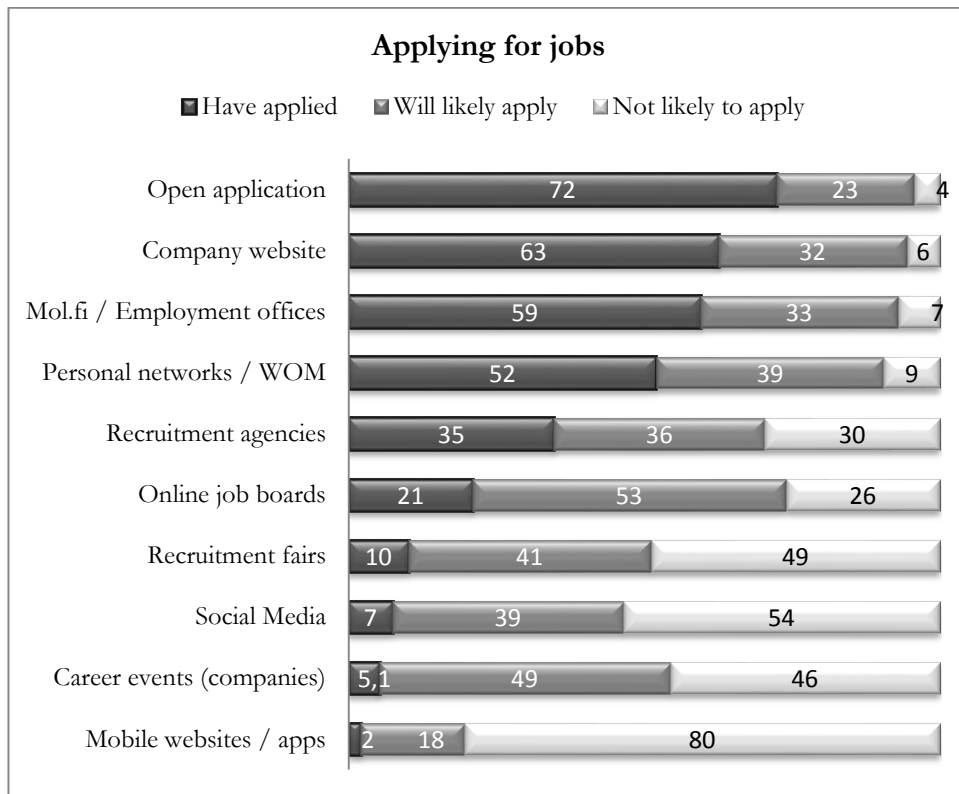


Chart 3. Channels used when applying for jobs by percentage. N = 531.

### 5.3 Social Media in job seeking and career development

The questionnaire contained questions regarding the Social Media channels used by the respondents and their opinions about Social Media in general. The respondents were also asked how they would like to use Social Media in job seeking and career development and what kind of advantages or disadvantages they saw in using Social Media for recruitment purposes.

#### 5.3.1 Social Media channels used by the respondents

The channels most commonly used were Facebook, wikis, sharing videos (YouTube) and messengers. These were all used by over 50 % of the respondents, however most students only used them for personal purposes. Those who used Social Media for ca-

reer purposes or both personal and career purposes mainly used Facebook (10 %), wikis (12 %) or YouTube (7 %). LinkedIn, the social networking site for professionals from various industries, was not used by the hospitality industry students in spring 2011: 97 % reported they did not know it at all or were not users.

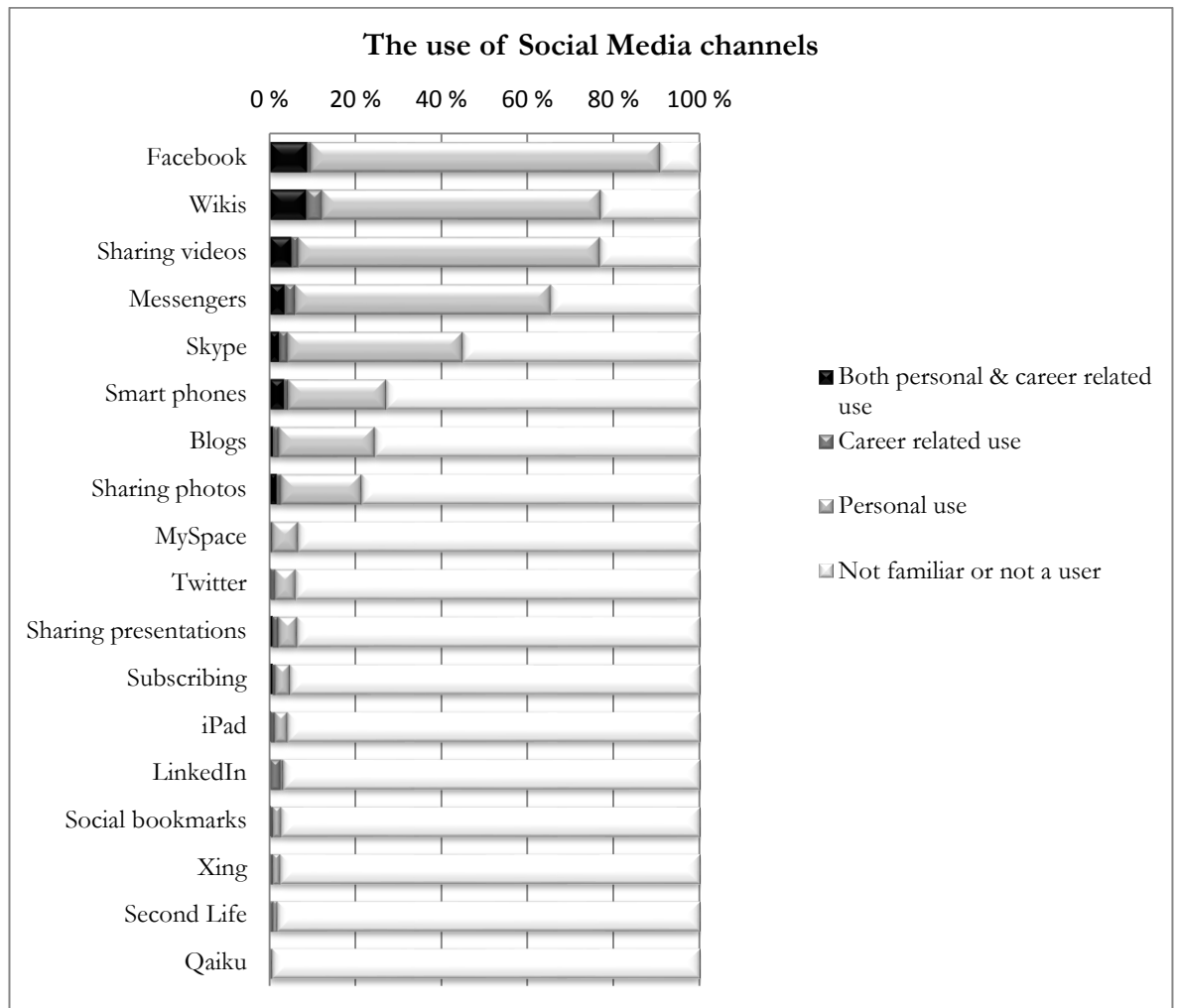


Chart 4. The use of Social Media channels by percentage. N = 531.

### 5.3.2 The respondents' views on Social Media

A 4-point Likert scale ( 1 = strongly agree, 4 = strongly disagree) was used for finding out the respondents' views on Social Media. The neutral option was removed as it was thought that with Social Media being still a somewhat new concept for some in 2011, the option to neither agree or disagree might have been the easiest option for many, yielding in uncertain results. Most seemed to fully or somewhat agree that Social Media in general is simple to use (mean 1,73), companies should be more active in Social Me-

dia (mean 1,89), being able to seek for jobs regardless of time and place is important (mean 1,57) and they would consider using Social Media for job seeking if there were more opportunities posted in it (mean 1,94). However, the respondents did not seem to fully agree with the perception of Social Media being a fast or transparent media – 44 % of the students somewhat agreed, and 30 % somewhat disagreed that finding and sharing information is faster in Social Media than in traditional media (mean 2,30). 54 % somewhat disagreed that Social Media provides sufficient privacy protection (mean 2,84). Traditional recruitment channels seemed to still be somewhat preferred over Social Media, and they were also thought to be slightly more trustworthy.

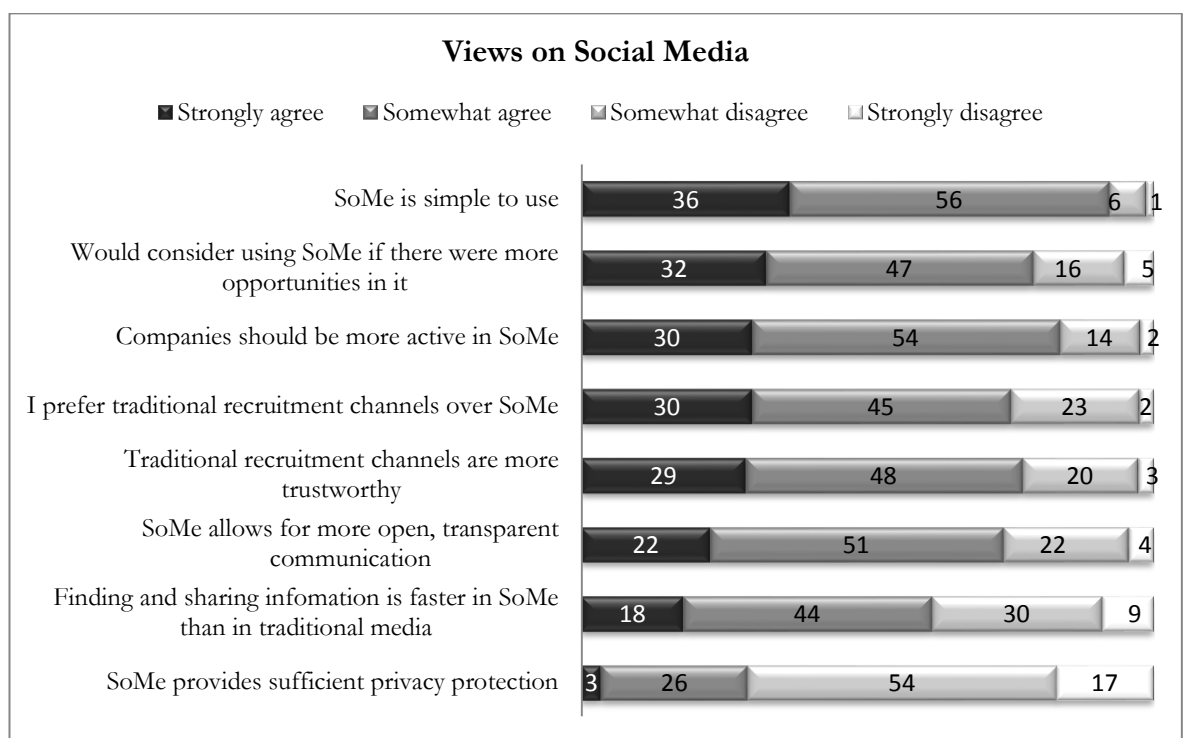


Chart 5. Views on Social Media in general by percentage. N = 531.

### 5.3.3 The uses of Social Media in job seeking

Should the respondents use Social Media for job seeking and career development, the features they would like to use seemed to revolve around getting more information – about open positions, the company, and the industry in general. More specific features such as current employee profiles and interviews or job interviews via Skype did not seem as hoped for. Over 60 % mentioned the possibility of asking for more information, yet only 36 % would like to have the possibility to communicate directly with

the recruiter – perhaps the idea of openly communicating with the recruiter prior to even applying for the job somehow seemed less favorable than merely having the chance to ask someone for more information, if necessary. Over 60 % would like to get tips for job hunting, should they use Social Media for job seeking.

The respondents also had the option to choose some other feature. While a few mentioned that they do not use Social Media or prefer only traditional channels, one mentioned that Messenger along with Skype might be a viable option if recruiting from abroad, and another person mentioned they would like all the unnecessary details left out and simply find out what type of person the company is looking for, how work is divided and organized and whether the company or the atmosphere is innovative and motivational.

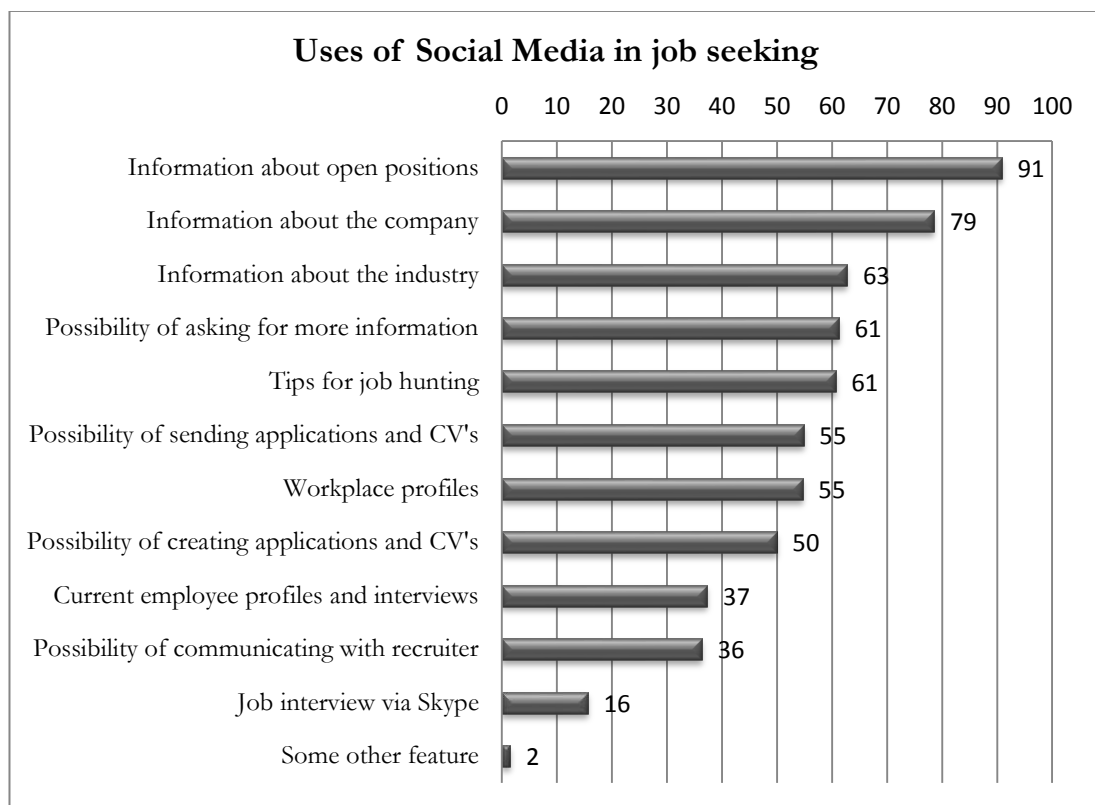


Chart 6. Uses of Social Media in job seeking by percentage. N = 531.

#### 5.3.4 The advantages and disadvantages of job seeking in Social Media

The respondents were asked to describe in their own words the advantages and disadvantages of using Social Media in job seeking. The responses to this open-ended ques-

tion were analyzed so that similar types of or responses or ideas were grouped together to find common themes. The question was designed to yield in a deeper understanding of how the students feel about using Social Media for job seeking. It was thought that the responses would complement and explain the numerical data.

The question itself did not explain whether the respondents were expected to think about the advantages and disadvantages from the jobseeker's or from the recruiter's perspective. This yielded in both types of responses – some mentioned the advantages or disadvantages Social Media brings to job seekers, while others had the companies' best interest in mind. When analyzing the responses, an interesting realization was that some of the aspects to recruiting in Social Media were seen as advantages by some, yet disadvantages by others. For instance, the job seeker's Social Media profiles were thought by some respondents to be a great asset and one that would help in finding a job, while others saw personal Social Media profiles as a reputation risk that would weaken their opportunities.

When analyzing the advantages, the main themes were convenience (from the job seeker's viewpoint), volume (from the recruiter's perspective) and image-related issues. Other identified themes dealt with networking and open communication. Many of the respondents mentioned Social Media being simple, easily accessed, fast, flexible and global. Convenience to the respondents also meant that Social Media can be accessed regardless of time and place, and that information can be quickly updated – if a post has become filled, for instance. Volume from the recruiter's perspective meant to the respondents that the amount of users or job seekers is vast, thus making it easier for companies to reach a large pool of competent job seekers. Reaching the younger generation workers was thought to be easier via Social Media than when recruiting via traditional recruitment channels.

Image-wise, some respondents thought that Social Media works as an advantage for those that present themselves well, giving them competitive edge over other job seekers. Differentiating oneself in Social Media was thought to be easier than in traditional media. For companies, the advantage would come from being able to find more detailed information about job seekers: what they are interested in, what they look like,



how familiar they are with Internet and Social Media, for instance. Social Media was also thought to bring more visibility to companies and function as a branding tool, improving employer image.

Networking was mentioned as an advantage by some. This mostly meant building relationships and referrals: having friends recommend jobs to each other and share information about job opportunities. As for open communication, some respondents mentioned that Social Media brings companies closer to job seekers, and by nature is more transparent than traditional media. Social Media's casual nature was also seen as an advantage.

As for disadvantages, the main themes were image-related issues, privacy protection and the line between real life and the virtual worlds, or entertainment versus work. Volume (from both the job seeker's and the recruiter's perspective), communication and accessibility were identified as common themes as well. Image-related issues mostly revolved around the job seeker's image and reputation – many expressed that Social Media makes personal information too transparent and visible for companies, and that companies might judge candidates based on their personal profiles and not their competencies. This was thought to be a disadvantage, as it might be challenging to portray the right employee image online, without somehow separating personal and professional profiles. Some worried that people applying for jobs in Social Media, or companies recruiting in Social Media might not be credible, and would not be taken seriously. A few mentioned that participating in Social Media might hurt the company's reputation, as it is difficult to control and predict.

Safety and privacy issues seemed to concern many of the respondents. A very common fear was that Social Media is not secure enough, and that personal information can be easily misused. A few mentioned that recruiting in Social Media is not reliable, as both companies and job seekers might make themselves look better in Social Media and turn out to be something other than expected.

Many expressed views indicating that it would be best to keep real lives and virtual lives separate, and to draw a clear line between entertainment and work. A few ex-

pressed that personal and professional profiles should not be mixed, or that Social Media is meant for personal and entertainment use only. Another disadvantage within the theme of keeping real life and virtual life separate was the fear of losing personal touch: some mentioned that Social Media and other online channels are impersonal compared to face-to-face situations, such as recruitment fairs, and that video interviews should not replace face-to-face interviews.

Volume-related issues were seen as disadvantages by some respondents. Many mentioned that the amount of users makes it more challenging for job seekers to stand out, and that the information provided online is too widespread and fragmented. Volume was also seen as a disadvantage from the company's viewpoint; some felt as though recruiting via Social Media would take up more time and resources than recruiting via traditional recruitment channels. Recruiting via Social Media might yield in more incompetent job seekers and difficulties in finding the right person for the right job, as companies would get too many applications due to the somewhat lower threshold to apply.

Communication and accessibility were also seen as disadvantages by a few respondents. Not all considered transparency and open communication positive aspects; these were also thought to be downsides by a few – although this group of students was considerably smaller than those who considered transparency to be an advantage in recruitment. A few respondents mentioned that Social Media is too laid back, and that the tone should be kept formal when recruiting. Some also seemed to worry that recruiting via Social Media might yield in more “PR talk” and that companies might start spamming Social Media users with job advertisements. As for accessibility, some reminded, quite justifiably, that not all potential job seekers can be reached via Social Media as not everyone knows how to use or wants to use it. Older workers were mentioned as an example of those who most likely will not be reached via different Social Media applications. Some mentioned connections problems as a disadvantage as well.

## 5.4 Advertising jobs from the students' perspective

The respondents were asked to choose three of the most important factors for them when choosing a job. Knowing their deciding factors was thought to assist recruiters when creating job advertisements. They were also asked to explain in their own words how they themselves would advertise open positions in the hospitality industry. Some respondents named specific channels, while others described how they would design ads. For many, this question seemed to function as a forum to express their opinions about the hospitality industry in general – those responses might also be highly useful for companies interested in employer branding and employer image.

The majority of the respondents chose work atmosphere (60 %) and work content (53 %) as two of the most important factors when choosing a job. Salary was chosen as the third most important deciding factor with 45 % of the respondents considering it to be in their top three priorities. 36 % of the students valued location, and almost 30 % of them chose development opportunities as one of the three most crucial factors when choosing a job.

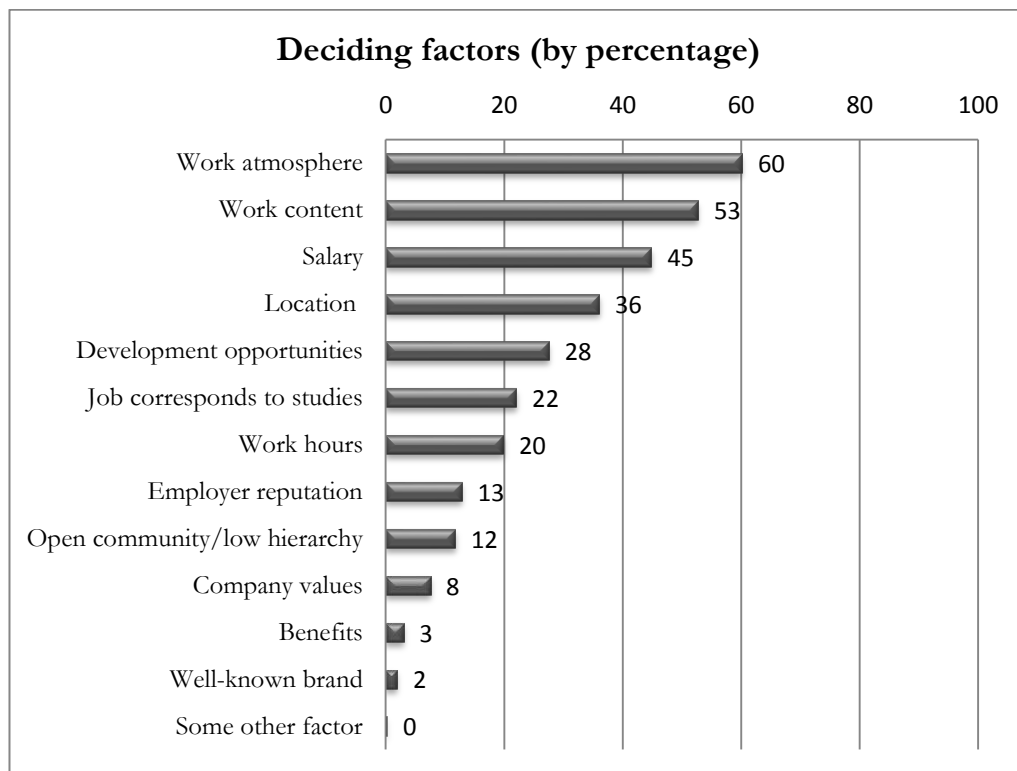


Chart 7. Crucial factors when choosing a job by percentage. N = 531.

When asked how students themselves would advertise open positions in the hospitality industry, the responses mainly fell into six categories: web-based recruitment, networking and face-to-face communication, image and reputation management, print media, other traditional recruitment channels and the design of the advertisements. A few miscellaneous responses that did not fall into any of these six categories included the use of any channel that reaches job seekers, and the use of any channel that corresponds to the company brand or the open position in question – the choice of channels could be made based on the job functions and education level required, as well as how youthful or conservative the company brand is.

Web-based recruitment can be divided into Social Media and other online recruitment channels. Many of the respondents simply mentioned “Social Media”, while some also pointed out Facebook as a specific Social Media channel. A few mentioned industry specific applications and forums, perhaps an entirely new application only for the hospitality industry. Social Media was thought by some respondents to be a good tool for reaching passive job seekers as well, and one that would bring more visibility to companies compared to traditional recruitment channels such as Mol.fi.

As for other online recruitment channels, company websites were seen as a great tool by many, especially if functional and interactive. They were thought to be useful for employer branding purposes as well. Current employees’ experiences on company websites were mentioned by some, and a few reminded that these would be a more transparent, open way of recruiting than for instance using a recruitment agency. Some commented that they would like less internal recruiting on company Intranets and more external recruiting on company websites. E-mail mailing lists, online job boards (such as Monster and Jobstep), sponsored links on search engines and job ads on websites that offer language courses were also mentioned. A few students simply mentioned that they would advertise open positions “preferably online”.

As for networking and face-to-face communication, quite many of the respondents wanted to see the co-operation between companies and schools improved and/or increased. Examples were mentioned: company recruiters should visit schools, and the use of info boards and schools’ Facebook pages, websites or intranets could be im-

proved. Other than improving the co-operation between schools and companies, a few mentioned recruiting fairs and open recruitment events held for instance in shopping malls. Word-of-mouth and personal networks were also mentioned by some, and one respondent explained that “newspaper job ads or online job ads are not as interesting as hearing about a job directly from someone working for a company.”

Improving company or industry image was also seen as a great way for advertising open positions. Some took this particular question as an opportunity to explain their view on the hospitality industry in general, and naturally recruiters in the hospitality industry should take into account these views as well. Some mentioned that open positions should be advertised by emphasizing great work atmosphere and versatile job functions, and by creating an image of an attractive, interesting, versatile trendy and/or international work place. Others thought that the employee’s opportunity to genuinely take part in developing the work environment and their own skills should be accentuated, and that companies should focus on creating attractive positions as well as offering better salary to be able to create some stability to the industry and keep employees more satisfied. A few said they would work on improving the customer service industry reputation, thus making it easier to recruit new employees. One of the respondents expressed they personally would emphasize the importance of having a degree that corresponds to the job functions, as the industry traditionally has suffered from low level of education among its workers. According to this person, creating job positions that would give the job seeker an opportunity to use the skills they have required during their studies could be beneficial if looking to recruit long-term employees. One respondent had a relatively sarcastic idea of recruitment in the hospitality industry, and asked if there were open positions in the hospitality industry as mostly they seem to be unpaid internships.

Print media was mentioned equally as often as Social Media or company websites, for instance. Most mentioned newspapers, especially Helsingin Sanomat or local newspapers, and industry magazines (such as Ikkunapaikka) were also mentioned – both printed and online. As for other traditional recruitment channels, Mol.fi and employment offices seemed to be the most popular, with TV and radio also receiving some attention.

While most of the respondents mentioned recruitment channels when asked how they would market vacancies, there were a few that focused on the design of the ad itself. Adjectives such as “visible”, “energetic”, “widespread”, “visual” and “creative” were used. Some felt as though job ads should better targeted for younger generations and those who have recently graduated, and that job ads should be “user-centered”.

## 6 Conclusions and recommendations

The main research questions to which this study aimed to seek answers were originally identified as follows:

- What are the hospitality industry students' perceptions of Social Media as a channel for job seeking, and which Social Media channels do they use?
- Where do hospitality industry students look for information about jobs and companies?

The aim was to survey current hospitality industry students on both upper secondary and tertiary level of education (vocational schools and universities of applied sciences) to find out how familiar they are with different Social Media applications, and what their views on Social Media are. The study also looked into their use of other recruitment channels, their deciding factors when choosing a job and how they themselves would advertise open positions. The underlying idea was that recruitment should be done where it is known to reach a sufficient number of prospective candidates – and as many Social Media professionals believe, the Generation Y can be easily reached via Social Media. Naturally there are channels that are more suitable for recruitment than others, and some variations occur as to what Social Media applications are used in Finland compared to other countries.

### 6.1 Main findings

The study shows that only 15 % of the hospitality industry students reported to use Social Media in spring 2011 when looking for information about jobs and companies, and over 50 % said they were not likely to apply for jobs via Social Media. Many of the traditional recruitment channels still seem more suitable for reaching these students – over 80 % of them went to Mol.fi and 67 % to company websites for information about jobs and companies, and 49 % found information in newspapers. Based on the results, the use of Social Media among hospitality industry students, at least for job seeking and career development purposes, was still quite marginal. Other than Facebook, YouTube, wikis and messengers, the respondents were not familiar with many of

the Social Media channels, or alternatively were not users. LinkedIn and Twitter, which Social Media professionals often describe as the “holy trinity” of Social Media alongside with Facebook, were only used by a minority of the students, with over 90 % of them either not knowing them at all or not using them.

When drawing conclusions about the respondents’ usage of various different applications, it is obvious that some are overall not quite as popular in Finland as they are in some other European countries or the US, for instance. This is the case with Xing, Second Life and MySpace. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is quite well-known in Finland already, but as it focuses on specialists and middle or upper management professionals, it comes as no surprise that it does not reach young hospitality students who are still in the beginning of their studies and have not yet entered working life. As for the marginal usage of Twitter and blogs, no clear conclusion can be drawn. Twitter has become more popular in Finland during the past year, but most likely there has not been a drastic increase in the hospitality students’ usage of Twitter.

The hesitation to seek for jobs in Social Media could to some extent be explained by the lack of job opportunities posted in Social Media in spring 2011. Students might not have yet felt comfortable looking for information about jobs and companies via Social Media, and there has not yet been a clear idea of what applying for jobs in Social Media could mean. A year ago, when the survey was conducted, Social Media was generally not yet used by the hospitality industry in Finland. At that stage, one company was known to recruit via Social Media – the Kämp Group operating in the Helsinki Metropolitan area. The results of the study indicate that hospitality students might have been waiting for companies to take the first step – after all, 84 % of the respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that companies should overall be more active in Social Media, and 79 % somewhat or strongly agreed that they would consider using Social Media for job seeking and career development if there were more opportunities posted in it.

The study shows that while some of the traditional recruitment channels were still preferred by the respondents, others – such as TV, radio, outdoors and recruitment fairs – were ranked lower when asking where students look for information about jobs and companies. When asked how they themselves would advertise open positions, many



mentioned Social Media or other online channels, yet only a few would have used recruitment fairs, TV, radio or outdoor ads. Print media was still a choice for many, along with web-based recruitment.

As for the students' perceptions of Social Media, the respondents considered it to be relatively easy to use, and it was important to be able to seek for jobs regardless of time and place. However, they to some extent perceived traditional recruitment channels as more trustworthy than Social Media, which, in their opinion, was lacking in privacy protection issues. Privacy and security were some of the main concerns of the respondents – many feared that their information could be misused, and that Social Media is not reliable enough for recruitment purposes. There were advantages as well: many of the respondents mentioned convenience and easy access, and seemed to appreciate the opportunity to network with others and share as well as receive recommendations.

The respondents' preferred ways of using Social Media for job seeking revolved around finding information about open positions as well as the company and industry in general. They wanted tips for job hunting, and to have the possibility to ask for more information. As for the deciding factors when choosing a job, three of the main issues were work atmosphere, work content and salary. The respondents also appreciated development opportunities and work location. Low hierarchy, employer reputation and company values did not seem to affect the respondents' decision making much – however these factors are quite abstract and not as concrete as a great work atmosphere, for instance. The importance of good reputation was brought up in another question, when asking the students how they would advertise open positions in the hospitality industry. As explained previously, many mentioned recruitment channels such as Social Media, the Internet and newspapers. However some considered improving industry reputation to be useful when recruiting, as the hospitality industry's reputation tends to suffer from seasonality and unsocial working hours, among other factors.

## 6.2 Recommendations for hospitality industry

Based on the results of the study, Social Media most likely cannot replace traditional recruitment channels. The results also indicate that not nearly all of the countless Social Media applications are suited for reaching job seekers in the Finnish hospitality industry. Some channels are not used by the majority of the younger generation future professionals, and others do not support external recruitment activities. It would, however seem that while some traditional recruitment channels might still be preferred by the respondents, others – such as TV, radio and outdoors – are less efficient than Social Media when it comes to reaching potential younger generation employees – yet these channels tend to be more costly for companies.

Even if the results do not show a significant use of Social Media for job seeking among the respondents, it does not automatically mean that companies will not benefit from it, or should not use it. As more companies make the decision to participate in Social Media, job seekers might get more accustomed to it being used for recruitment as well. This conclusion is made based on the results, as many of the respondents wanted for companies to be more active in Social Media. Or, as a few of the respondents pointed out when asking where they would advertise open positions, “why not use any channel that reaches potential employees”. The benefits obviously come from relatively low costs as well, compared to some of the traditional recruitment channels.

As for the applications suitable for recruitment purposes, the result show that LinkedIn and Twitter will not reach the majority of the young job seekers in the hospitality industry. Based on the results, Facebook and YouTube are the two main channels which also support recruitment activities to some extent, Facebook being somewhat more versatile than YouTube. Facebook, which was used by 80 % of the students, allows for job advertisements, referrals, employer branding activities and sharing information in different forms that enable interactivity - text, photos, audio, video, quizzes and competitions being some of them. It allows for companies to share information about open positions and about the company and industry by using for instance current employee profiles and interviews. Other functions important to the hospitality students – tips for job hunting and the possibility to ask for more information – can be

provided via Facebook as well. A separate application that functions in Facebook can be useful but is not absolutely necessary. Often the development of such an application takes more time and resources to than simply creating a Facebook page.

YouTube, on the other hand, can be used for employer branding – creating a positive employer image online and giving information about the company might lead to more successful recruits. Videos on YouTube are known to have the potential to create a buzz and go viral, as well as spread to other Social Media channels or the print media. Employer branding seems well-advised considering the results of the study, with many respondents mentioning the need to improve industry image.

Based on the results, companies are advised to consider privacy and security issues when recruiting via Social Media. These were some of the main concerns of the respondents – many feared that their information could be misused, and that Social Media is not reliable enough for recruitment purposes. Taking into account these concerns, and the fact that most Social Media applications do not support the sending of applications directly, it is recommended that a separate return channel should be used, whether it is the company website or e-mail.

As for the information provided in job advertisements, the results indicate that accentuating good work atmosphere and giving accurate and detailed information of the content of the work might be useful. Based on the results, development opportunities might be worth explaining as well, as they matter to the young hospitality workers. Based on the results, salary is a crucial deciding factor as well, with 45 % of the respondents considering it to be in their top three priorities. If wages can be negotiated and do not follow the collective agreement (TES), this based on the results might be a good selling point as well. The results also indicate that when recruiting young hospitality workers, employer branding and working towards improving the industry reputation would be a great way of differentiating a company from competitors and building an image of a reliable, stable employer.

### **6.3 Suggestions for future research**

Social Media has for some time now been quite a trendy topic, and one that is of interest to companies representing various industries all over the world. Despite the widespread and global interest to utilize Social Media in marketing, communications and human resources, not too many Finnish or European studies have been conducted yet. When writing this thesis, one of the main challenges was the lack of academic articles on the subject. The possibilities of recruiting via Social media have been much discussed over the past year or so – however the discussions usually take place online and in Social Media, and thus have been left out as sources of information in this thesis. There are numerous books and articles published in English about corporate Social Media, but they mainly focus on marketing and communications – not on human resource management or recruitment.

In this sense, further research done on recruitment in Social Media would be welcome. This thesis focuses on the perceptions of the hospitality students, and their usage of Social Media. Future research could be done from the industry's perspective. Conducting a qualitative study on how companies in the hospitality industry are actually using Social Media for recruitment or other areas of human resources, and which applications they are using, could be beneficial. This type of a study could involve the advantages and disadvantages companies find that Social Media has brought to human resources and recruitment, and the experiences companies have had when recruiting candidates via Social Media.

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# Appendices

Appendix 1. The use of Social Media in job seeking and career development, Finnish version

## Sosiaalisen median käyttö työnhaussa ja urakehityksessä

### Taustatiedot

#### 1. Sukupuoli? \*

- ☐ Nainen
- ☐ Mies

#### 2. Kuinka vanha olet? \*

A small graphical user interface for selecting age. It consists of a grid of numbers from 1 to 99, with navigation arrows (back, forward, and search) around it.

#### 3. Missä oppilaitoksessa opiskelet tällä hetkellä? \*

- ☐ Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulu
- ☐ Hyria Koulutus
- ☐ Ammattiopisto Lappia
- ☐ Laurea ammattikorkeakoulu
- ☐ Mikkelin ammattikorkeakoulu
- ☐ Rovaniemen ammattikorkeakoulu
- ☐ Savon ammatti- ja aikuisopisto
- ☐ Tampereen palvelualan ammattiopisto
- ☐ Turun ammattikorkeakoulu
- ☐ Vaasan ammattiopisto

#### 4. Missä koulutusohjelmassa opiskelet? \*

- ☐ Asiakaspalvelun koulutusohjelma (Tarjoilija)



- ☐ Cook training programme
- ☐ Degree Programme in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management
- ☐ Degree Programme in Experience and Wellness Management
- ☐ Degree Programme in Tourism
- ☐ Degree Programme in Facility Management
- ☐ Hotelli- ja ravintola-alan koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Hotelli- ja ravintola-alan liikkeenjohdon koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Hotellipalvelun koulutusohjelma (Vastaanottovirkailija)
- ☐ Kokin koulutusohjelma (Kokki)
- ☐ Matkailun koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Matkailun liikkeenjohdon koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Matkailupalvelujen koulutusohjelma (Matkailupalvelujen tuottaja)
- ☐ Matkailupalvelujen myynnin- ja tietopalvelujen koulutusohjelma (Matkailuvirkailija)
- ☐ Palvelujen tuottamisen ja johtamisen koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Palveluvastaavan koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Ravintolakokkin koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Utbildningsprogrammet för turism

**5. Kuinka monta vuotta olet opiskellut kyseisessä koulutusohjelmassa? \***

- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4-5
- ☐ 6+

**6. Mikä seuraavista vaihtoehdoista kuvaa parhaiten tämänhetkistä työtilannettasi? \***

- ☐ En työskentele tällä hetkellä
- ☐ Työskentelen osa-aikaisesti
- ☐ Työskentelen kokoaikaisesti

**7. Mitä seuraavista kanavista käytät etsiessäsi tietoa yrityksistä tai työmahdollisuuksista? Voit valita useamman vaihtoehdon \***

- ☐ Työpaikkailmoitukset painetuissa lehdissä
- ☐ Yritysten nettisivut
- ☐ Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto / Mol.fi
- ☐ Rekrytointiyritykset / Henkilöstöpalvelut
- ☐ Rekrytointipalvelut netissä (esim. Oikotie, Monster, Uranus, Jobstep, Heebo)
- ☐ Työpaikkamainokset netissä (sponsoroidut linkit)
- ☐ Rekrymessut
- ☐ Yritysten järjestämät tilaisuudet
- ☐ Radiomainonta
- ☐ TV-mainonta
- ☐ Ulkomainonta
- ☐ Alan painetut- ja verkkolehdet
- ☐ Henkilökohtaiset verkostot / ystävät / puskaradio
- ☐ Sosiaalinen media (esim. sosiaaliset verkostot, blogit, mikroblogit, wikit, virtuaaliset maailmat)
- ☐ Hakukoneet (esim. Google, Bing, Yahoo)
- ☐ Mobiilinettisivut tai mobiilisovellukset
- ☐ Jokin muu kanava, mikä

**8. Minkä kanavien kautta olet hakenut työpaikkaa tai työharjoittelupaikkaa, tai uskot hakevasi tulevaisuudessa? \***

	Olen hakenut	Uskon hakevani	En usko hakevani
Avoin hakemus (esim. meilitse tai paperilla) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yritysten nettisivut *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto / Mol.fi *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rekrytointiyritykset / Henkilöstöpalvelut *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Rekrytointipalvelut netissä (esim. Oikotie, Monster, Uranus, Jobstep) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rekrymessut *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yritysten järjestämät tilaisuudet *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Henkilökohtaiset verkostot / ystävät / puskaradio *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosiaalinen media (esim. sosiaaliset verkostot, blogit, mikroblogit, wikit, virtuaaliset maailmat) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mobiilinetisivut tai mobiilisovellukset *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. Mitkä seuraavista sosiaalisen median sovelluksista tai laitteista ovat sinulle tuttuja? \***

	En tunne tätä	Tunnen, mutta en käytä tätä	Käytän tätä henkilökohtaisessa elämässäni	Käytän tätä työhaussa sekä urakehityksessä	Käytän tätä henkilökohtaisessa elämässäni sekä työhaussa ja urakehityksessä
Facebook *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MySpace *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Qaiku *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Xing *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wikit (esim. Wikipedia, MediaWiki) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Videoiden jakaminen (esim. YouTube, Vimeo) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Prentaatioiden ja dokumenttien jakaminen (esim. Slideshare, Prezi) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kuvien jakaminen (esim. Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa webalbumit) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogit (esim. Blogger, WordPress, Vuodatus, LiveJournal) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosiaaliset kirjanmerkit (esim. Digg, Reddit, StumbleUpon, del.icio.us) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Verkkosyötteiden tilaaminen (esim. RSS feed, FeedBurner) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second Life *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skype *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Messengerit (esim. Windows Live, Whatsapp, Kik) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Älypuhelimet *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
iPad *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. Mitä mieltä olet seuraavista väitteistä? Huomaathan, että sinun tulee arvioida sosiaalista mediaa (sosiaaliset verkostot, blogit, mikroblogit, wikit ym) yleisesti - ei erityisiä sovelluksia kuten Facebook, LinkedIn tai Twitter. \***

	Olen täysin samaa mieltä	Olen jos- sain määrin samaa miel- tä	Olen jos- sain määrin eri mieltä	Olen täysin eri mieltä
Sosiaalisen median käyttäminen on yksinkertaista *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yritysten pitäisi olla yleisesti ottaen aktiivisempia sosiaalisessa mediassa *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harkitsisin sosiaalisen median käyttämistä työhaussa jos siellä olisi enemmän vapaita työmahdollisuuksia tarjolla *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosiaalisen median avulla löydän ja jaan tietoa yrityksistä ja työmahdollisuuksista nopeammin kuin perinteisiä työnhakukanavia käyttämällä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosiaalinen media mahdollistaa avoimemman, läpinäkyvämmän kommunikaation *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulle on tärkeää voida etsiä ja hakea töitä paikasta ja ajasta riippumatta, silloin kuin itse haluan *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Käytän työhaussa mieluummin perinteisiä työnhakukanavia kuin sosiaalista mediaa *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perinteinen media ja työnhakukanavat ovat luotettavampia kuin sosiaalinen media *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosiaalinen media tarjoaa riittävän yksityisyydensuojan *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. Millaisia ominaisuuksia toivoisit sosiaaliselta medialta työhaussa ja urakehityksessä? Voit valita useamman vaihtoehdon \***

- ☐ Tietoa vapaista työpaikoista / harjoittelupaikoista
- ☐ Mahdollisuus luoda ja päivittää hakemuksia ja CV:itä suoraan sovelluksessa
- ☐ Mahdollisuus lähettää hakemuksia ja CV:itä suoraan sovelluksessa

- ☐ Nykyisten työntekijöiden profiileja ja haastatteluja
- ☐ Työpaikkaprofiileja
- ☐ Tietoa yrityksestä
- ☐ Tietoa alasta
- ☐ Vinkkejä työnhakuun
- ☐ Työhaastattelu esim. Skypen välityksellä
- ☐ Mahdollisuus kysyä lisätietoja vapaasta työpaikasta
- ☐ Rekrytoijan tai mahdollisen esimiehen kanssa kommunikointi
- ☐ Jokin muu ominaisuus

**12. Jos vastasit edelliseen kysymykseen "jokin muu ominaisuus", millaista ominaisuutta toivoisit?**

**13. Mitä etuja tai haittoja sosiaalisen median sovellusten käyttäminen sinun mielesiäsi tuo rekrytoinnille?**

**14. Mitkä seuraavista ovat sinulle tärkeimmät kriteerit työpaikkaa valitessasi? Valitsehan kolme tärkeintä \***

- ☐ Työpaikan sijainti
- ☐ Työn sisältö
- ☐ Työ vastaa koulutustani
- ☐ Palkka
- ☐ Edut

- ☐ Työnantajan maine
- ☐ Avoin työyhteisö ja matala hierarkia
- ☐ Työilmapiiri
- ☐ Tunnettu brandi
- ☐ Ura- ja kehittymismahdollisuudet
- ☐ Työajat
- ☐ Yrityksen arvot
- ☐ Jokin muu tekijä

**15. Kuinka sinä mainostaisit hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualan avoimia työpaikkoja?**

**16. Onko Scandic sinulle tuttu työnantajana?**

- ☐ Olen työskennellyt tai työskentelen tällä hetkellä Scandicilla
- ☐ Olen hakenut töitä Scandicilta
- ☐ Voisin harkita hakevani töitä Scandicilta
- ☐ En ole kiinnostunut työskentelystä Scandicilla

**17. Oletko nähnyt Scandicin työpaikkailmoituksia? Jos kyllä, niin tarkennathan missä.**

- ☐ Kyllä
- ☐ Ei

## Appendix 2. The use of Social Media in job seeking and career development, English version

### The use of social media in job seeking and career development

#### Background information

##### 1. Gender? \*

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

##### 2. How old are you? \*



##### 3. Where are you currently studying? \*

- ☐ Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences
- ☐ Hyria Education
- ☐ Lappia Vocational College
- ☐ Laurea University of Applied Sciences
- ☐ Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences
- ☐ Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences
- ☐ Savo Vocational College
- ☐ Tampere College of Services
- ☐ Turku University of Applied Sciences
- ☐ Vaasa Vocational Institute

##### 4. What is your study programme? \*

- ☐ Asiakaspalvelun koulutusohjelma (Tarjoilija)



- ☐ Cook training programme
- ☐ Degree Programme in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management
- ☐ Degree Programme in Experience and Wellness Management
- ☐ Degree Programme in Tourism
- ☐ Degree Programme in Facility Management
- ☐ Hotelli- ja ravintola-alan koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Hotelli- ja ravintola-alan liikkeenjohdon koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Hotellipalvelun koulutusohjelma (Vastaanottovirkailija)
- ☐ Kokin koulutusohjelma (Kokki)
- ☐ Matkailun koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Matkailun liikkeenjohdon koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Matkailupalvelujen koulutusohjelma (Matkailupalvelujen tuottaja)
- ☐ Matkailupalvelujen myynnin- ja tietopalvelujen koulutusohjelma (Matkailuvirkailija)
- ☐ Palvelujen tuottamisen ja johtamisen koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Palveluvastaavan koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Ravintolakokkin koulutusohjelma
- ☐ Utbildningsprogrammet för turism

**5. How many years have you been studying there? \***

- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4-5
- ☐ 6+

**6. Which of the following best describes your current employment situation? \***

- ☐ I am currently not employed
- ☐ I work part-time
- ☐ I work full-time

**7. Through which of the following channels do you look for job opportunities and information about companies? You can choose multiple options \***

- ☐ Newspaper job ads
- ☐ Company web site
- ☐ Employment and Economic Development Office / Mol.fi
- ☐ Recruiting agencies / Personnel services
- ☐ Online job boards or portals(eg. Oikotie, Monster, Uranus, Jobstep, Heebo)
- ☐ Online job ads (sponsored links)
- ☐ Recruiting fairs
- ☐ Events organised by companies
- ☐ Radio advertisement
- ☐ TV advertisement
- ☐ Outdoor advertisement
- ☐ Industry magazines (paper and online versions)
- ☐ Personal networks / friends / word of mouth
- ☐ Social media (eg. social networks, blogs, microblogs, wikis, virtual worlds)
- ☐ Search engines (eg. Google, Bing, Yahoo)
- ☐ Mobile websites or mobile apps
- ☐ Some other channel, please specify

**8. Through which of the following channels have you applied for a job or an internship in the past or will likely apply for in the future? \***

	I have applied	I will likely apply	I am not likely to apply
Open application (via eg. e-mail or on paper) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Company web site *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment and Economic Development Office / Mol.fi *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting agencies / Personnel services *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Online job boards (eg. Oikotie, Monster, Uranus, Jobstep) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting fairs *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Events organised by companies *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal networks / friends / word of mouth *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media (eg. social networks, blogs, microblogs, wikis, virtual worlds) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mobile websites or mobile apps *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. Which of the following social media tools or devices are you familiar with? \***

	I do not know this	I know this but am not a user	I use this in my personal life	I use this for job seeking and career development	I use this both in my personal life and for job seeking
Facebook *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MySpace *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Qaiku *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Xing *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wikis (eg. Wikipedia, MediaWiki) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sharing videos (eg. YouTube, Vimeo) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sharing presentations and documents (eg. Slideshare, Prezi) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sharing photos (eg. Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa web albums) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs (eg. Blogger, WordPress, Vuodatus, LiveJournal) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social bookmarks (eg. Digg, Reddit, StumbleUpon, del.icio.us) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Subscribing (eg. RSS feeds, FeedBurner) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second Life *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skype *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Messengers (eg. Windows Live, Whatsapp, Kik) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Smart phones *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
iPad *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Please note that you should evaluate social media (social networks, blogs, microblogs, wikis etc) in general, not specific social media tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter. \***

	I strongly agree	I somewhat agree	I somewhat disagree	I strongly disagree
Social media is simple to use *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Companies should overall be more active in social media *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I would consider using social media for job seeking if there were more job opportunities posted in it \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Social media allows for me to find and share information about companies and job opportunities faster than traditional recruiting channels \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Social media allows for more open, transparent communication \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Being able to seek and apply for jobs where and when I want to, regardless of time and place, is important to me \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I prefer traditional recruiting channels over job seeking in social media \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Traditional media and recruiting channels are more trustworthy than social media \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Social media provides sufficient privacy protection \*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

**11. How would you like to use social media in job seeking and career development?  
You can choose multiple options \***

- ☐ Information about open positions / internships
- ☐ Possibility of creating and updating applications and CV's directly in the application
- ☐ Possibility of sending applications and CV's directly in the application
- ☐ Current employee profiles and interviews
- ☐ Work place profiles
- ☐ Information about the company
- ☐ Information about the industry
- ☐ Tips for job hunting

- ☐ Job interview via eg. Skype
- ☐ Possibility of asking for more information regarding the position
- ☐ Communicating with the recruiter or prospective supervisor
- ☐ Some other feature(s)

**12. If you chose "some other features", please specify?**

**13. In your opinion, what are the advantages or disadvantages of using social media tools for recruiting?**

**14. Which of the following are the most important factors for you when choosing a job?  
Please choose those 3 that you consider the most important \***

- ☐ Location of work place
- ☐ Work content
- ☐ Job corresponds to my studies
- ☐ Salary
- ☐ Benefits
- ☐ Employer reputation
- ☐ Open work community and low level of hierarchy
- ☐ Work atmosphere
- ☐ Well-known brand
- ☐ Career development opportunities
- ☐ Work hours

- ☐ Company values
- ☐ Some other factor

**15. How would you advertise open positions in the hospitality industry?**

**16. Are you familiar with Scandic as an employer?**

- ☐ I have worked / currently work at Scandic
- ☐ I have applied for a job at Scandic
- ☐ I would consider applying for a job at Scandic
- ☐ I am not interested in working at Scandic

**17. Have you spotted Scandic's job and recruiting ads anywhere? If so, please specify where.**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### Appendix 3. Results: background information

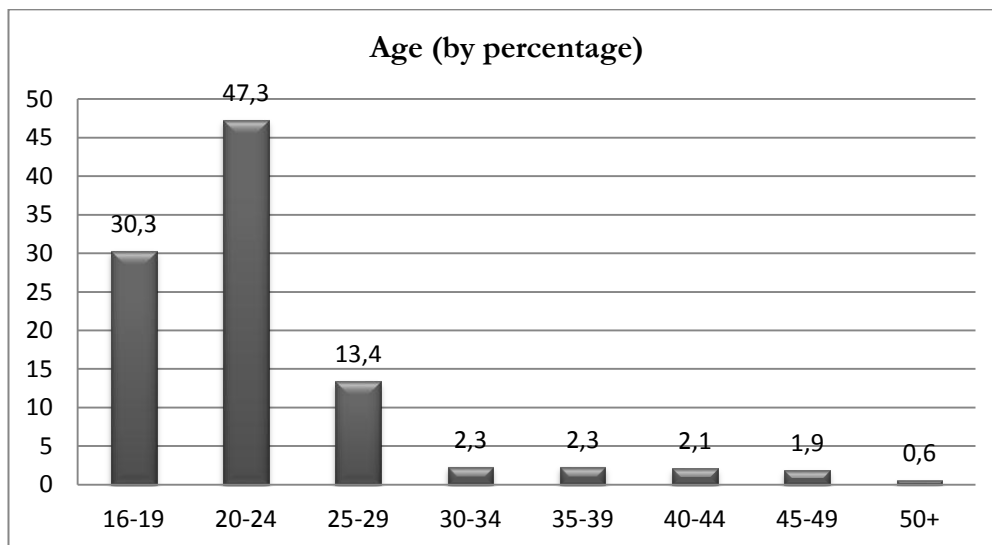


Chart 1. Age of respondents by percentage. N = 531.

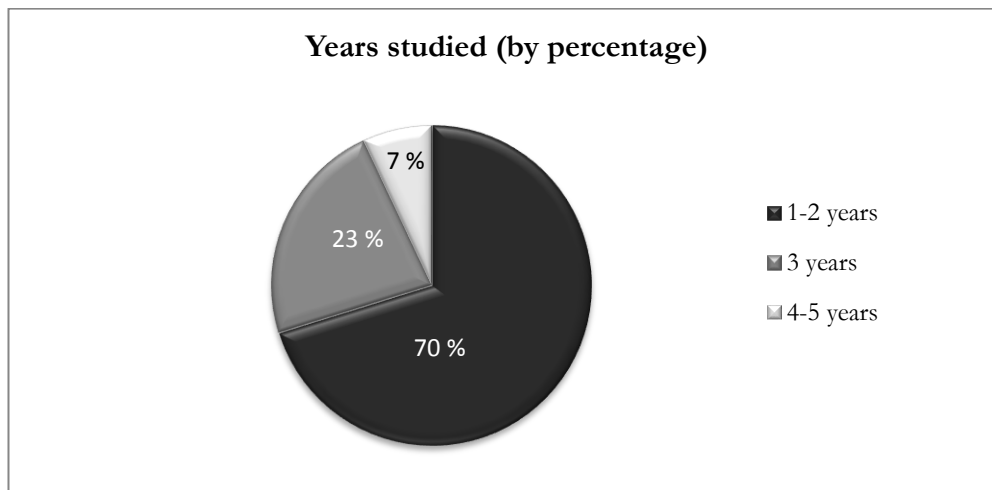


Chart 2. Years studied by percentage. N = 531.

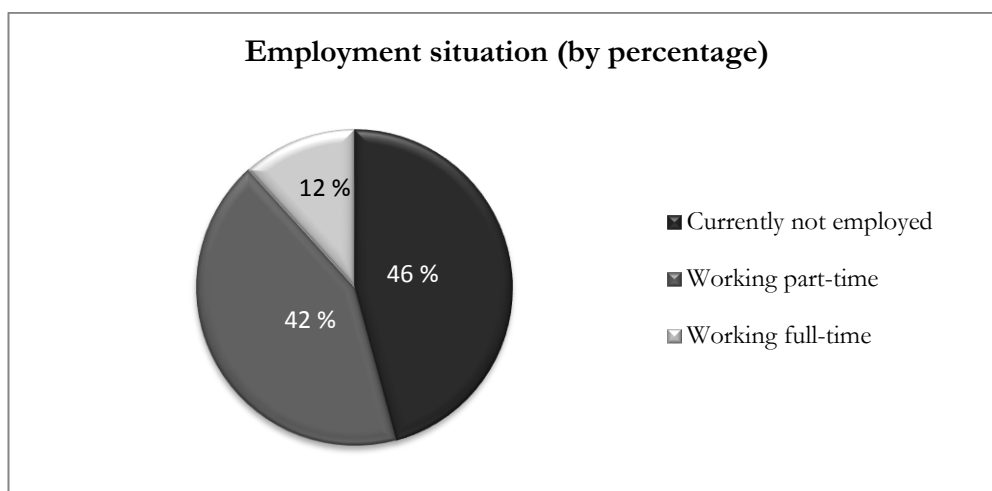


Chart 3. Current employment situation by percentage. N = 531.